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The Start of a New Era?: Examining the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) and Experiences of Latinas

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The Start of a New Era?:

Examining the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) and Experiences of Latinas

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Dedication

Dedico esta tesis doctoral a mi esposo Luis S. Santiago Jr, e hijos Luis J. Santiago III, Itzel J. Santiago y Cocos que viene en camino. Gracias por su amor y apoyo incondicional. ¡Los amo mucho!

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Con mucho cariño, amor, admiración y respeto para toda mi familia y comunidad Latina, Mexicana, inmigrante, Mexico-Americana/Chicana/Xicana. ¡Con sacrificio¸ esfuerzo, y ganas sí se puede!

The Start of a New Era?:

Examining the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) and Experiences of Latinas

Publication No._____

Hortencia Jiménez, Ph. D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2011

Supervisor: Michael Young

Through fifty-three in-depth interviews with activists, community members, immigrants, students, and allies, this dissertation research explores the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC), a nonprofit immigrant rights organization in Austin, Texas that formed as a response to the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act (H.R. 4437) in the spring of 2006. Three layers of questions guide this research: (1) How did AIRC emerge from the established organizations and activist networks in Austin, Texas? (2) What did AIRC do after the 2006 marches and what is its relationship with organizations in Austin? (3) What are the different ways AIRC has attempted to mobilize Latino(a) and pro-immigrant activism?

My dissertation demonstrates that the 2006 mobilizations in Austin, Texas were part of a concerted effort by non-profit organizations, grassroots groups, activists, allies, and college and high school students. Amongst these many active participants, Latinas took a lead. The prominence of the work of similar coalitions throughout the U.S. during *La Primavera Latina* of 2006 and the lack of prominent male leadership suggests that

across the nation, as in Austin, a new type of organizational lead is emerging in the Immigrant Rights Movement (Ramírez Perales-Ramos, Arellano 2010). The 2006 mobilizations reveal a different type of leadership, not an absence of one. In Austin, Latinas took on various leadership roles to move the AIRC forward during and beyond the 2006 marches. This dissertation explores the significance of new leadership, a process approach to leadership which I term "doing leadership." The four processes of doing leadership embody shared leadership, leadership that serves the community, leadership that leads by obeying, and leadership unfolds behind the scenes.

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INTRODUCTION

La "Primavera Latina" of 2006

It was a hot Monday afternoon on April 10, 2006 in Austin, Texas when I arrived at the footsteps of the State Capitol to join thousands of participants in a massive rally to oppose HR 4437, a national bill that sought to criminalize undocumented immigrants and any one helping them. The Austin march and similar marches across the nation sought to stop the bill as well as to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform. People were chanting "¡*Viva Mexico!"* (long live Mexico) "¡*Si Se Puede*!" (yes we can), "¡A*qui estamos y no nos vamos, y si nos hechan nos regresamos!*¡" (here we are and we are not leaving and if they kick us out we will return), waving U.S., Mexican, and a few other Latin American flags.

Austin's rally was part of a series of massive marches that occurred throughout the United States over three months, culminating in what organizers called "A Day without Immigrants," on May 1st, 2006. Marches like the one I attended in Austin also took place in New York, Washington D.C., Las Vegas, Nevada; Miami, Florida; Chicago, Illinois; Los Angeles, California; San Francisco, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Denver, Colorado; Phoenix, Arizona; New Orleans, Louisiana; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and many other cities across America (¡Qué marcha!, 2006; Truax, 2006b). During these three months, an estimated 3.5 to 5.1 million Latinos protested in the streets of over 160 cities in the U.S (Bada, Fox, & Selee 2006; Fox 2006; Manzano, Ramírez, & Rim 2007).

The political threat that prompted the 2006 mass mobilizations across the U.S. was the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, also known as the "Sensenbrenner bill" or house bill H.R. 4437. House bill H.R. 4437 was introduced by Congressman James Sensenbrenner from Wisconsin, on December 16 2005. The legislation passed the House of Representatives in late 2005. Although H.R. 4437 ultimately failed to pass the Senate, in the spring of 2006 its fate was unclear and the political threat to immigrants very real and alive. Had H.R. 4437 become law it would have defined undocumented immigrants and those who aid them as *felons*. It would have required state and local law enforcement agents to turn over to federal authorities any undocumented immigrants they detained, and increased criminal penalties for document fraud. The bill also called for hundreds of miles of fencing to be added along the U.S.-Mexican border (Siskind Susser Bland 2005; Suro and Escobar 2006). In places like Austin, supporters of immigrant rights coordinated an unprecedented mobilization of grassroots support and mass defiance to block this bill.

When HR 4437 passed the House it galvanized a variety of immigrant groups, humanitarian and religious organizations, church leaders, unions, students and the Spanish speaking media bringing them together in opposition to H.R. 4437. The 2006 mobilizations started on February 14 in Georgetown, Delaware with marches attracting 1,500 people and in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with 5,000 people (Bada, Fox, Zazueta and García 2006). Smaller marches were also reported in late February in Florida and early March in Oregon, and Washington. The first march to attract national attention occurred in Washington D.C on Monday, March 6 involving approximately 30,000

people. This march marked the beginning of a series of massive mobilizations throughout the country (Bada et al. 2006). In Chicago, the March 10 Coalition called supporters to rally. In response, 500,000 people took to the streets (Ramírez¸Perales-Ramos and Arellano 2010). From March 11 to April 7, the marches expanded to 76 cities (Cano 2009). The Los Angeles, California march on Saturday, March 25, was extraordinary in scale, attracting according to activists and organizers, 1.7 million people (Robinson 2007). Immigrant rights marches continued through April with protests reported in well over a hundred cities across the country, peaking on April 10, and effectively ending with the May 1 National Great American Boycott (Bada et al. 2006; Cano 2009; Truax 2006).

In the immediate wake of the 2006 "Primavera Latina" immigrant rights demonstrations, newspapers commented that "el gigante dormido ya despertó" [*the sleeping giant has awakened*] and that immigrants are no longer "invisible" (Durán, 2006; J. Hernández, 2006; Mittelstadt, 2006). These statements were misleading given the forty years of the Immigrant Rights Movement (IRM) and the long historical legacy of Latino struggles for social justice in the United States (Acuña 2007; Navarro 2005).[1] The Immigrant Rights Movement of the last forty years has not been in a state of quiescence but rather "brewing, nurtured by key grassroots leaders and organizations for

[1]Activists and scholars of Chicana(o)/Latina(o) studies trace the origins of the Immigrant Rights Movement to Bert Corona. Bert Corona and Soledad Alatorre founded *El Centro de Acción Social Autónoma* (CASA) in 1968 as a mutual assistance social welfare organization to provide services to undocumented Mexican workers. CASA was one of the first organizations that explicitly made connection to the immigration issue, provided undocumented immigrants with services, and pushed the larger Chicano movement to adopt a more progressive position on immigrant rights issues. See Garcia 1994; Gutiérrez 1995; Pulido 2006 for further reading.

many years" (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Salas 2008: 210). The immigrant rights protests of the spring 2006 may have suddenly impressed skeptics and journalists that the Immigrant Rights Movement was alive, but "this movement did not drop out of the sky overnight" (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Salas 2008: 210). It is a movement that has slowly and consistently been making headway over the years with activists of the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and1970s and activists who have honed their advocacy and organizing skills before and after the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (Bada, Fox and Selee 2006; Fox 2010). These generations came together in 1994 against California's Proposition 187 and again against H.R. 4437 in 2006, but this time primarily under immigrant leadership (Fox 2010). The aim of this dissertation is to explore the extent to which this new immigrant leadership represents a new era in the movement.

Austin, Texas participated in this national wave of marches by attracting over 10,000 people on April 10, 2006, making it one of the largest demonstrations in Austin in 30 years (Castillo 2006: A01). In Austin, the march was not the first protest against H.R. 4437. As in many other American cities, the high school student walkouts appeared first. On Thursday, March 30, hundreds of students walked out of at least four high schools and two middle schools in Austin. In the suburb of Round Rock, students walked out at one of the two high schools. On Friday, March 31, two to three hundred students walked out of the second Round Rock high school (Jiménez, Barbarena and Young, 2011). Ana Yañez-Correa, executive director of the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition and one of the organizers of the April 10 march in Austin put it this way: "it was high school students that put us to shame because they were the first who stood up for their own

beliefs" (Castillo 2006b: A01). The loosely organized high school student walkouts and the organized march on April 10 by community organizations revealed the burgeoning activism by organizations and individuals in Austin, Texas but who exactly was behind the 2006 immigrant rights mobilizations? The walkouts were undirected and relatively spontaneous (Jiménez, Barbarena, Young 2011). The march in Austin, however, was organized by new organization, the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC)

This dissertation research explores the 2006 immigrant rights mobilizations in Austin, Texas by examining the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) that formed in 2006 as a response to H.R 4437. I seek to explain how the AIRC formed, what role it played during the 2006 mobilizations, and what the AIRC is doing now. By explaining the history and current work of AIRC, we can better understand the future role of coalitions like AIRC in the Immigrant Rights Movement.[2] By examining the AIRC I address three complementary layers of research questions: (1) How did AIRC emerge from the established organizations and activist networks in Austin, Texas? (2) What did AIRC do after the 2006 marches and what is its relationship with organizations in Austin? (3) What are the different ways AIRC has attempted to mobilize Latino(a) and pro-immigrant activism? One of my key findings is that Latinas took a leading role in the work of the AIRC. This study seeks to illuminate the role and experiences of Latinas in the AIRC by building on Robnett's (1996) framework of bridge leaders and Martinez

[2] Croteau & Hiicks (2003: 255) define coalitions when "organizational level networks are formalized, either temporarily or permanently, into an entity that is comprised of member organizations, yet that has an identity distinct from any single member organization. Such entities can range from little more than letterhead used for jointly issued press releases, to formal, staffed groups that carry out all the functions of a separate organization."

(2010) work on women's participation in the immigrant rights movement. Scholars have noted the absence of a male charismatic leader in the immigrant rights movement. The prominence of coalitions, and the work of women behind these coalitions, may help explain how the Immigrant Rights Movement is advancing in this new era in spite of or maybe because of the lack of male leadership (Ramírez Perales-Ramos, Arellano 2010). The 2006 mobilizations reveal a different type of leadership, not an absence of one.

Theoretical Frameworks

This dissertation is rooted in social movement theories on political opportunities, organizations and coalitions and the literature on Latina/Chicana and Latino/Chicano studies.

Resources and Political Opportunity

Two paradigmatic theoretical frameworks developed in the social movement literature suggest that resource mobilization and political opportunities explain contentious collective action. Scholars of the resource mobilization tradition focus on the importance of both economic and organizational resources for successful social protest (DiazVeizades and Chang 1996; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Tilly 1978; Zald and McCarthy 1987; Williams 1999). For resource mobilization theorists, time, money, and other resources like facilities explain when and how movements emerge. Scholars focus on the ability of social movement organizations and their leadership to mobilize internal and external resources such as leadership skills, finances, access to elite networks, and

indigenous organizational resources (McCarthy & Zald 1977; Morris 1984). Personal or professional networks embedded in churches, civil associations, and voluntary organizations can be used to lead to collective action (McCarthy & Zald 1977). Some scholars have found that local organizations play a central role in immigrant and ethnic minority mobilization (Bloemraad 2006; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Wong 2006). Work by Martinez (2008) reveals that Latinos are more likely to participate in a public meeting, demonstration, letter writing campaign, or boycott when they live in cities with greater numbers of Latino organizations. These organizations not only provide access to information, leadership development skills, but also serve as a base for the emergence of social movements. Resource mobilization is indispensable in understanding how the 2006 marches mobilized grassroots resources. In particular, case studies of immigrant organizing emphasize the importance of immigrant networks and organizations in generating political participation among immigrants (Flores-Gonzalez, Pallares, Herring, and Krysan 2006; Benjamin-Alvarado, DeSipio, and Montoya 2007). Benjamin-Alvarado and associates (2007) point out that the existence of networks and resources allowed for the possibility of immigrant rights mobilization in 2006.

Simply focusing on the resources does not adequately explain how organizations work together or divide the labor in the mobilization and distribution of movement resources; in addition, it pays scant attention to the political environment. Another theoretical framework in the social movement literature suggests that the political environment is central to understanding contentious collective action. State-centered social movement scholars in the 1970s and 1980s developed the political process model

as a complement to resource mobilization emphasizing the importance of the political context. Political opportunity and threat are two central ideas of the political process model, the former receiving much more attention (Goldstone and Tilly 2001; Almeida 2003; Tilly 1978;).

The political process model focuses on the specific political opportunities in a movement's environment that facilitate collective action by providing incentives to protest when there are elite conflicts, external allies, shifting ideologies of those in power, and relaxation in state repression (Almeida 2003; Jenkins & Perrow 1977; McAdam 1982, 1984; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Tarrow 1998;). The presence of allies within the political system may inspire protest as social movement organizations realize that change is possible. Koopmans and colleagues (2005) discovered that institutional openings in the formal political structure such as the ease of access to naturalization, voting rights, state-sponsored anti-discrimination agencies, were important in understanding immigrant claims making, suggesting that a supportive political environment can improve the prospects for collective organizing among groups.

Political threats have not been explored as extensively as opportunity, but over the last 10 years, there has been renewed interest in the relationship between political threats and movement mobilization (Almeida 2003; Goldstone and Tilly 2001; Jenkins, Jacobs, and Agnone 2003; Okamoto and Ebert 2010; Van Dyke and Soule 2002). Goldstone and Tilly (2001: 181) argue that threat is "often treated as merely the flip side of opportunity, a negative measure of the same concept, so that "increased threat" simply equates with "reduced opportunities." Doing so the authors argue is misleading because threat should

be seen as an independent factor that has the possibility of influencing groups and the state. Furthermore, they argue that opportunity is always in interaction with current and repressive threats, and that this interaction gives rise to varied dynamic patterns of protest and contention. They define opportunity as "the probability that social protest actions will lead to success in achieving a desired outcome" and threat as the "costs that a social group will incur from protest or that it expects to suffer if it does not take action" (2001: 182-183).

Groups may either be driven by positive environmental indications and institutional incentives to push toward new demands and extend benefits (political opportunity) or be pushed into action in fear of losing current goods, rights, and safety (threat) (Almeida 2003). For example, in his study of two protest waves between 1962 and 1981 in El Salvador, Almeida (2003) found that the political opening in the 1960s was characterized by institutional access and competitive elections benefiting organizational entrepreneurs in the labor, educational, and church sectors. The political opportunities diminished in the 1970s but the organizational infrastructure survived. Organizations that survived provided "a fungible resource infrastructure" from which protest waves were able to emerge between 1977 and 1981 (Almeida 2003:350). During this period the Salvadoran state became more exclusive and repressive, which created a threatening political environment. The organizational infrastructure that was set in place in the early 1960s served to sustain contention and launch protest campaigns against the

new threats of the authoritarian regime.[3] In sum, social movement scholars in the political process model tradition are calling attention to negative environmental threats as encouraging contentious activity (Almeida 2003; Goldstone and Tilly 2001; Van Dyke and Soule 2002).

The aforementioned literature is helpful in explaining why an external threat like H.R 4437 triggered massive mobilizing at a national scale. Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado and his colleagues (2008) found that the anti-immigrant rhetoric of H.R.4437 facilitated immigrant mobilization in new destination states such as Nebraska. The rhetoric surrounding the national threat of H.R 4437 was perceived as anti-immigrant and anti-Latino. Scholars of Latino politics have noted that when Latinos feel threatened because they are Latinos, they will embrace a unifying pan-ethnic identity (Benjamin-Alvarado et al 2008). Okamoto and Ebert (2010) argue that for immigrants, threats instigate collective action when immigrant groups are faced with exclusion and discrimination on the basis of citizenship, language, and immigrant status.

However, the literature on social movements does not capture the organizational infrastructure that the Chicano/a Mexican American community in the 1960s paved for the immigrant rights movement that we have today. My contribution to the social movement literature lies in building and bridge with the rich literature on Chicano/a Latino/a studies to explain the immigrant rights movement. This interchange begins with

[3] The organizational infrastructure that was created in the 1960s in El Salvador was important to launch protest campaigns against the regime in the decades that followed. This parallels the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) legislation that Congress passed in the U.S. IRCA led to an organizational infrastructure in the Latino/Mexican American community that was able to respond to threats in the 1990s like proposition 187 and H.R. 4437 in 2006.

the examination of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 followed by a discussion of the dispersion of immigrants to new destinations. In closing this section I draw and *build* on the social movement literature on coalitions putting forth a new perspective. I argue for the importance of a new type of coalition, an immigrant rights coalition.

Immigration Reform and Control Act

The threat (H.R 4437) may explain the timing of the demonstrations but not the form they took and where they took place. Immigrant rights marches appeared everywhere—well outside the traditional strongholds of past mobilizations. Why? The role of established Latino organizations, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986, and the dispersion of the Latino population in the US are all important factors. Established and long-time Latino and Mexican American organizations and networks in the immigrant rights movement all responded to the threat of H.R 4437 (Benjamin-Alvarado et al., 2007; Brooks 2006; Caballero 2006; Durán 2006a; Fischer 2006; Manzano et al., 2007; Truax 2006c). Organizations like the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), as well as other state and local organizations throughout the country were able to do so because of the organizational infrastructure that was set in place in large part because of the immigration reform of 1986.

Immigration reform in the late 1980s was also critical to the emergence of a national infrastructure of organizations in the 1990s. The passage of IRCA did not prompt the birth of social justice struggles of Latinos in the U.S. since Latinos, in particular, people of Mexican descent have been organizing to protect themselves against racial discrimination for decades, but it helped the nationwide spread of the movement (Marquez and Jennings 2000). The period of the late 1980s and 1990s was marked by responding to the urgencies and contingencies of IRCA in which community-based organizations provided services, outreach information, and advocacy for immigrants (Hondagneou-Sotelo and Salas 2008). Organizations and leaders of this time were involved in lobbying efforts, but most of their energy was spent in providing services for amnesty-legalization needs. IRCA prompted and provided an incentive for the first big formation and national coordination of immigrant rights efforts that in turn, were pivotal in responding to anti-immigrant sentiment of the 1990s and the acute political threat of 2006 (Hondagneou-Sotelo and Salas 2008). For the first time, during this period "immigrant rights" entered the *national* discourse (Hondagneou-Sotelo and Salas 2008).

The impact of IRCA on protest mobilization became clear in the 1990s. When California's proposition 187 passed in 1994, it prompted massive mobilization by Latino communities. Other legislation of this time that prompted protest included the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility (IIRIRA), and the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWOR). Lawyers, established Latino organizations, and community based organizations shifted from providing services to organizing for immigrant rights. The efforts during this time were

directed at organizing immigrants to become involved in both the formal political arena (voting, citizenship acquisition) and in immigrant collective action through protests, rallies and marches (Okamboto and Ebert 2010).

As communities across the country wrestled with similar issues, immigrant rights coalitions' gained momentum in major cities like New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, El Paso (Dunn 2009; Hondagneou-Sotelo & Salas 2008). For instance, in California, the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) emerged, bringing together many different organizations as well as the Border Network for Human Rights in El Paso, Texas. This and other citywide and statewide coalitions worked with national organizations like the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR) and the National Immigration Forum (Hondagneou-Sotelo and Salas 2008).

Dispersion of Immigrants

The form of the 2006 demonstrations and where they took place was also clearly influenced by the national dispersion of immigrants over the past two decades. Immigration scholars have found four explanations to the geographical dispersion of immigrants to different states: 1) the passage of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), 2) proposition 187, 3) border enforcement, and 4) a shift in labor demand (Durand et al., 2000; Griffith 2005; Hernandez-Leon & Zuñiga 2000; Massey and Capoferro 2008; McClain et al., 2003; Smith and Furuseth 2006a). Immigrants are moving from the five traditional gateways (California, New York, Texas, Florida, and

New Jersey) to states like Nebraska, Idaho, Ohio, and Alabama. The diffusion of immigrants to nontraditional states is important because "it changes the political landscape of immigrant organizing and offers the potential that immigrants in areas of new migration may become politically engaged more rapidly than the existing scholarship would predict" (Benjamin-Alvarado et al., 2008: 5). The demonstrations of 2006 suggest that this indeed is happening with the mushrooming of immigrant rights organizing in places like Alaska, Alabama, Nebraska.

Coalitions

The aforementioned scholarship is useful in understanding the changing nature of organizations in the 1980s and 1990s, as well as the spread of immigrants to new destinations, but how was this dispersed population mobilized? I argue that coalitions are the key. A decentralized network of coalitions emerged before and during the spring of 2006. At the heart of this network were organizations that came together quickly on a local level, bringing together community organizations connected to immigrants in a myriad of ways. Women, who are not typically self-centered but other-directed and who share leadership more easily than their male counterparts were instrumental in this coming together.

Social movement research notes that coalitions often form in reaction to threats and are important for the mobilization of protests, demonstrations or social movement events (Jones, Hutchinson, Van Dyke, Gates, and Companion 2001; Staggenborg 1986; Van Dyke 2003). Van Dyke (2003) writes that social movement organizations that work

in coalition with other groups are more likely to achieve success. Creating broad coalitions that cut across movement boundaries enables social movement organizations to stage events with a large number of participants (Jones, Hutchinson, Van Dyke, Gates, & Companion 2001). In her research on coalition work in the pro-choice movement, Staggenborg (1986) finds that coalitions are likely to form under conditions of exceptional opportunity or threat, when organizations lacked the resources to meet environmental opportunities or threats, or when coalition work allows organizations to conserve resources for their own individual programs. My contribution to the social movement literature on coalitions lies in putting forth a new typology of coalition, an Immigrant Rights Coalition that is both influenced by Chicano/a Latino/a Studies and social movements.

I argue that an Immigrant Rights Coalitions (herein after referred to as IRCs) should be taken seriously as contributing factors in this unprecedented mobilization of immigrant demonstrations.[4] In my research of IRC formation, Jiménez (forthcoming) I found five explanations for the emergence of IRCs: 1) the passage of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), 2) local law enforcement collaboration with ICE, 3) raids, 4) anti-immigrant legislation, and 5) an increase of Latino immigrants in non-traditional settlement states. IRCs have been in existence for over thirty years but what is new is that they are now widespread, found throughout the U.S. mobilizing

[4]IRCs are composed of participants from different sectors ranging from immigrant communities, grassroots organizations, public officials, labor unions, faith based groups, faculty, to students. An IRC advocates, and/or mobilizes around immigrant, refugee, and human rights issues at the local, state, and/or national level. An IRC is a not-for-profit organization and may have a 501(c)(3) status, though not a requirement. An IRC can be a short term ad-hoc coalition but must have organized at least one action event (i.e., rally, march, vigil, lobby). See Jimenez (forthcoming) for further discussion.

massive and interregional grassroots support. The breadth of immigrant rights coalitions is no longer confined to California or the southwest as it now reaches to traditionally non-immigrant settlement cities.

What happened with the IRCs that formed in the spring of 2006 to meet the threat of H.R 4437? Did they survive as the threat succumbed? If they did survive, have they changed their form as the threat of H.R. 4437 passed? This dissertation research suggests that the answer from the Austin case is that they did survive and change. The Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) for example had to protect itself from organizations that wanted to use the coalition for their own purposes. Social movement scholars have long noted the fissures, conflict, and internal power struggles that exist between and among organizations involved in coalitions (Barkan 1986; Heaney and Rojas 2008; Shaffer 2000; Staggenborg 1986). Outside groups and organizations may be hesitant to engage in coalition work with mainstream organizations based on a fear of being co-opted and the possibility of competing for the same members (Shaffer 2000).

In his study of environmental groups, Shaffer (2000) found that coalition work can have the effect of blurring organizational identities, and therefore, diminishing the ability of a particular group to survive. Similarly, Staggenborg (1986) observes that smaller pro-choice movement organizations worried about participating in coalition work for fear of losing their identity and fear of larger organizations taking over. In support of the above literature, this dissertation research finds that the AIRC went through a similar period between the summer and fall 2006 where outside groups like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) tried to co-opt the momentum of the immigrant rights

movement in Austin, and direct the AIRC agenda. Moreover, since 2006, AIRC struggled to keep its identity and autonomy from another powerful Austin social movement organization. Between the spring of 2006 and March 2008, Rebeca, executive director of *Projecto Defensa Laboral* (PDL), was also the coordinator for the AIRC. The double role of Rebeca created a murky organizational identity for AIRC that often led to tensions between PDL and AIRC membership. This tension continued as well as between Rebeca and the newly hired coordinator for the AIRC in March 2008. In defending the AIRC from non-immigrant organizations and in an endeavor to create its own organizational identity, the AIRC had to become a different kind of coalition, a membership based coalition that is led *by* and *for* immigrants through the Human Rights Promoters/*Promotores de Derechos Humanos*. A network of immigrant Human Rights Promoters have become the central driving force in the vision, mission, and organization of the AIRC.[5]

Role of Women in The Movement

Women, in particular Latinas, are central figures in keeping the cohesion and momentum of coalitions alive (Jiménez 2011). In this new mobilization era, women are at the forefront of the immigrant rights movement. Latinas deploy gendered forms of leadership that emphasize the relational rather than positional aspects of leadership. This

[5] The *Promotores de Derechos Humanos* principle is based in organizing within immigrant communities. Human rights promoters are trained on human and constitutional rights using a train the trainer methodology. Immigrants who are trained as human rights promoters are then able to train other participants become knowledgeable about civil, political, constitutional and human rights. The training-for-trainer model is created by and for immigrants, and focused on their experiences. See chapter 5 for further discussion.

kind of leadership is less concerned with power or control of turf, and leads others into political participation through the use of personal relationships (Hardy-Fanta 2002: 20). The relational/connection work that women did in past movements, behind the formal male leadership is now the primary center and focus of mobilization in the immigrant rights movement. This dissertation answers Belinda Robnett's (2002: 284) call for a relational approach to the study of collective identity as it provides a critical starting point for studying movement participation. African American women in the civil rights movement were the bridge leaders, the intermediate layer of leadership in the micro-mobilization of the civil rights movement. As bridge leaders, African American women formed a bridge between the social movement organization(s) and potential adherents and constituents and between potential leaders and those already inclined to movement activity (Robnett (1996: 1661).[6]

Building on the extant Chicana/Latina scholarship of leadership, I contribute to the understanding of leadership by proposing four processes of "doing leadership" among Latina immigrants: (1) shared leadership (2) leadership that serves the community, (3) leadership that leads by obeying and (4) leadership that unfolds behind the scenes. This dissertation builds on the findings of past research on how women construct leadership, but also departs by proposing a sociological understanding of leadership as a routine,

[6] Robnett argues that gender provided a construct of exclusion that helped to develop a strong grassroots tier of leadership that served as a critical bridge between the formal organization and adherents and potential constituents. Women were heavily involved in secondary leadership roles even when they were not involved in the top layers of civil rights movement leadership (Robnett 1996: 1667).

continuous, and recurring accomplishment.[7] These elements echo Chicana/Latina feminist calls to move away from a hierarchical model of understanding leadership, towards a more expanded definition that captures women's diverse leadership practices.

Latinas facilitated and mobilized participation in the immigrant rights movement and its aftermath. In the absence of a charismatic male leader, the movement both at the local and national level points to the centrality of women (Jiménez 2011). Latinas were both at the "frontlines" in the planning and organizing of the marches and in the "execution process" behind the scenes doing the grassroots outreach inviting people to attend the rally. Latinas are leading non-profit organizations in Austin, creating and building a grassroots base. Latinas as both heads of non-profits and grassroots activists are crucial for the long term sustainability of the immigrant rights movement.

Organization of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized in seven chapters. Chapter one examines the historical legacy of Mexican American social justice struggles and its influence on the 2006 immigrant rights marches. Chapter two includes a discussion of the methodology used to conduct this study. Chapter three offers an analysis of the emergence of Immigrant Rights Coalitions (IRCs) across the country. Chapter four discusses how the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) emerged from established organizations and activist networks in Austin. Chapter five examines the AIRC post the 2006 mobilizations

[7] I borrow from Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman (1987) the concept of "doing gender" that accounts for the reproduction of gender through social interaction.

and its relationship with organizations in Austin. In chapter six, I examine the role of Latina women in the AIRC. The conclusion centers on the future role of IRCs like the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition in the immigrant rights movement.

CHAPTER 1: THE START OF A NEW ERA?

In this chapter, I examine the historical trajectory of Mexican American social justice struggles and its legacy in the 2006 immigrant rights marches. Building on Magaña & Mejia's (2004) five stage historical framework of Latino and immigrant activism, I propose a sixth stage in this historical framework characterized by a growing number of immigrant rights coalitions, the apparent lack of a male charismatic leader, and new ways of understanding Latina leadership and activism.

Historical Legacy of Mexican American Social Justice Struggles

As the oldest Latino communities in the United States, Mexican Americans have a long history of organizing to protect themselves against racial discrimination and economic exploitation. Since the end of the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), Mexican Americans have continually organized collective responses to racism, segregation, exploitation, and violence (Acuña 2007; Larralde 1976; Marquez & Jennings 2000; A. Navarro 2005; Servin 1970; Torres & Katsiaficas 1999). As the Mexican American population grew, so did the number of advocacy and civil rights organizations representing Mexican American communities (Tirado, 1970). Given this long history, the mobilizations of 2006 do not represent an awakening in Chicano(a)/Latino(a) activism, but they may represent a new era in this long history of Latino and immigrant struggles.

Magaña & Mejia (2004) provide a historical framework to help situate the events of 2006 and the present stage of Latina(o) and immigrant activism. They identify five

major stages in the history of Latino grassroots politics: first, the period of oppositional politics after 1848 immediately following the U.S. annexation of northern Mexican territories (*1848-1900)*; second, the period of the mutual aid societies, and industrial labor activism (*1900-1940)*; third, the period marked by World War II known as the Mexican American generation (*1940s-1960s)*; fourth, mass demonstrations and movements for civil rights during the 1960s and 1970s (*1960s-1970s)*; and fifth, the period leading up to the present, involving local and transnational forms of protest politics and grassroots organizing *(1980s-1990s*).[8]

First Stage 1848-1900

The first era started in 1848 in response to the takeover of Mexican lands by force and the subsequent experiences of Mexicans as conquered people (Almaguer, 1994; M. Barrera, 1979). During this period it was difficult to develop a sustained and interregional organized resistance movement, but it was common to find bands of armed resistance led by Mexican American men such as Gregorio Cortez, Tiburcio Vazquez, and Joaquin Murieta (Larralde 1976; Magaña & Mejia 2004: 63). For example, Gregorio Cortez is considered a hero by Mexicans living in South Texas and a horse thief and sheriff killer by Anglos (Larralde 1976). Historians note that his pursuit was one of the largest

[8] Navarro (2005, pp. 23-24) similarly uses a historical context to document Mexican American struggles as the epoch of resistance (1848-1916), adaptation (1917-1945), social action politics (1946-1965), militant protest politics (1966-1974), viva yo Hispanic generation (1975-1999), Hispanic generation politics (1975-1999), and the epoch transition (2000-2003). Magaña & Mejia's (2004) framework is very similar to Navarro's framework. For this dissertation I use the latter as it provides a more succinct analysis.

manhunts in American history and signified the struggles between Anglo-Americans and Mexicans in South Texas (Larralde 1976; Zamora 2000). The first stage is characterized by insurgency mainly led by male leaders, nonetheless is a significant stage since it shows the resistance and struggles of Mexican and Mexican Americans. Nonetheless, it would take another four decades before the rise of mutual aid societies would bring a new stage in activism.

Second Stage -1900-1940

The second period is characterized by the rise of *mutualistas (*mutual aid societies). Mutual aid societies are the oldest Mexican American organizations. They emerged in the late 1880s in Mexico as a result of the threats to the handicraft trades. Artisans were forced to seek self-organization and as a result established organizations to defend their social status and to protect their economic interests. Zamora (2000) writes that mutual aid societies met the material needs of their members with emergency loans and other forms of financial assistance like job seeking services, and death and illness insurance. They also offered their members leadership experiences in civic affairs, sponsored newspapers and private schools, and organized community events for entertainment. In the U.S., mutual aid societies promoted a Mexicanist and pan-Mexican identity for both immigrant and U.S.-born citizens. It was important in providing their members and communities a sense of identity and belonging due to the hostile environment toward immigrant and Mexican Americans (Calderon 2000; Zamora 2000).

The oldest known voluntary association is the Confraternity of Brothers of Our Father Jesus of Nazareth, known as *Los Penitentes* (José Hernández, 1983:15). Another well-known mutual aid society is *La Alianza Hispano Americana*, founded in Tucson in 1894 by a group of elite Mexican American families. One of the largest and most unique *mutualistas* to develop was the *Club Mexicano Independencia* (CMI), formed in Santa Barbara in 1917 (Camarillo 1979). Some of the mutual aid societies organized by women in the 1890s and 1900's included *Sociedad de Hidalgo, Sociedad Josefa Ortíz de Domínguez, Sociedad Unión Mexicana de Señoras y Señoritas, Sociedad Dorcas Industrial de Señoras, Sociedad Femenil Mexicana, Sociedad Recreativa Femenil Guadalupana. Sociedad Josefa Ortíz de Domínguez* persisted at least through the early 1900s (Calderón, 2000: 72-73; Camarillo 1979: 142-165; S. Navarro 2004). Women were in charge of their own mutual aid societies and elected their own officers (Camarillo 1979: 148). Women also participated in cultural and political activities such as music recitals, theatrical works, and annual celebrations of patriotic holidays, as well as public meetings, and civic programs (Calderón 2000: 65).

Mutualistas led civil rights efforts long before the more recent Mexican American legal defense organizations (Calderon 2000). Mutual aid societies were the underpinnings for the development of other political associations and trade unions of the 1930s (Acuña 2007; Calderon 2000; Zamora 2000). What distinguished *mutualistas* from later organizations formed in the 1930s and 1940s was their Mexican nationalism and rejection of cultural assimilation.

Activism of the 1930s was shaped by the Great Depression and repatriation campaigns launched specifically at deporting 500,000 undocumented Mexican immigrants. In spite of the deportations, the growth of U.S. born Mexican Americans gave rise to a more educated political leadership in Mexican American communities (M. T. Garcia 1989; Sanchez 1993). This new leadership emphasized the rights of citizenship in the United States and endorsed the American system of government.

By 1930, Mexican community leaders began to realize that more specialized organizations were needed. In 1921 *Orden Hijos de America* was founded, it restricted its membership to citizens of the United States of Mexican or Spanish origin. *Orden Hijos de America* founded the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), which remains today the oldest and largest civil rights organization (Tirado 1970: 56-59). LULAC formed in 1929 in Harlingen, Texas and since its inception was integrationist and assimilationist. LULAC was committed to a firm Americanization program designed to integrate the Mexican-American youth in the Anglo-American mainstream of life.[9] LULAC also worked to expand civil and political rights and to increase equality for Mexican Americans. LULAC fought numerous court battles against discrimination and racial segregation (Orozco, 2009). In the 1930s, LULAC and other similar organizations gave high priority to the achievement of civil rights for all Mexicans in the United States, engaging in a process of political integration that emphasized voting, running for office, and promoting Mexican American political organizations (Garcia 1989)

[9] In the 1980s LULAC shifted its assimilation rhetoric and began working in coalition with MALDEF and the NCLR on issues concerning immigration reform, and providing testimony at congressional committee hearings (see Garcia & Garcia 1977; Sierra 1991).

Although early Mexican American organizations were integrationist and reflected the assimilationist values of the larger society, they served as a spring-board for the emergence of alternative organizations in the 1940s and 1950s like the G.I Forum, the Community Service Organization, and student organizations by Mexican American college students that would later become central for the Chicano movement of the 1960s.

Third Stage- 1940s-1960s

Mario Garcia (1989) calls this period the Mexican American Era. He illustrates how the impact of World War II and the Great Depression shaped Mexican American movements and leaders. Mexican Americans served in the armed forces, but continued to be treated as second class citizens upon their return to the U.S. Returning Mexican American veterans from WWII formed the G.I. Forum in 1947 as a result of discrimination against a war veteran who was refused burial by a funeral home in Three Rivers, Texas (Orozco, 2009). "If they [Mexican Americans] were good enough to risk their lives for their country, they believed they had a right to all the benefits of American citizenship" (Garcia 1989:28). Mexican American war veterans engaged in grassroots organized movements to protest racial discrimination, labor exploitation, police abuse, and housing segregation (Zlolniski 2007).

After the war ended, community based organizations (CBO's) became prominent advocates for Mexican American concerns, in particular the Community Service

Organization (CSO).[10] The CSO was founded in Los Angeles in September 1947, it addressed a wide range of issues from educational reform in the local schools to cases of police mistreatment (Servin 1970; Tirado 1970: 64). Unlike LULAC, the CSO was a civic organization that did not expound assimilation values but rather aimed at helping and organizing Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants through direct action, coalition building, and leadership development.

Concerned with the undocumented Mexican population, the U.S. government launched Operation Wetback in the 1950s where almost 4 million Mexicans and U.S born Mexican Americans citizens were deported to México (Grebler, Moore & Guzman 1970: 521). Others scholars argue that the concern of the Mexican population on the U.S side was by the Mexican government who felt they were losing workers and hence pushed U.S authorities for deportations (Hernandez, 2010). Nonetheless, scarce economic and political opportunities, discrimination as well as rising expectations among Mexican Americans gave rise to a new leadership that was cognizant of their rights as U.S citizens. This leadership came from working-class leaders as well as a handful of intellectuals who forged a spirited and persistent struggle for civil rights.

By the 1950s and 1960s more avowedly Mexican American organizations emerged that were less concerned with assimilation, and addressed a broad range of

[10] Community organizations were modeled after the famous Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) founded by activist Saul Alinski in Chicago, an organization that developed an exemplary and effective model of grassroots mobilizing based on direct action and confrontation tactics, coalition building, leadership development, and close cooperation with religious congregations (Industrial Areas Foundation 2008). IAF served as a model for numerous Mexican American groups for Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) in San Antonio (1974), United Neighborhood Organization (UNO) in Los Angeles (1976), and Valley Interfaith and El Paso Inter-Faith Service Organization in (Industrial Areas Foundation 2008; (J. Garcia 2003: 162)

community problems. These include the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) and the Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organizations (PASO) (Tirado, 1970). There was also a proliferation of Chicano student organizations such as United Mexican American Students (UMAS), Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO), Mexican American Student Organization (MASO), Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), to name a few (José Hernández 1983: 131; A. Navarro 1995: 51-52; Servin 1970). These organizations were important for the emergence of the Chicano Movement and subsequently the immigrant rights movement since many of the seasoned activists of the 1960s supported immigrant rights efforts.

Fourth Stage 1960s-1970s

During the 1960s, a decade of insurgence in the U.S., the Chicano Movement emerged. The 1960s were a time of intense activism and militancy for Mexican Americans. The movement grew out of Mexican American impatience with the racism of the larger society and strongly stated demands for justice, fairness, and equal rights (Acuña 2007). Mexican Americans identified their present situation as part of continuing exploitation and institutional discrimination. The movement rejected traditional stereotypes of Mexican Americans as lazy and apolitical and proclaimed a powerful and positive group image and heritage with slogans like "Brown Power," "Chicano Power," "Brown is Beautiful" (Garcia 1989; NLCC Educational Media 1996, Rosales 1997). The Chicano movement gave rise to many new groups and leaders, the four most commonly known are Rodolfo 'Corky' Gonzalez who led the Crusade for Justice in Colorado; José

Angel Gutierrez who led La Raza Unida Party in Texas, Reies López Tijerina, who led the land grants movement in New Mexico, and César Chávez who led the farm worker movement in California. Mexican American women were heavily involved in the Chicano Movement, but encountered sexism and gender discrimination within it (Delgado-Bernal 1998). The activism of the 1960s was also shaped by massive school "blowouts" (walkouts) by Chicano students throughout the Southwest. Chicano students demanded the end to discrimination in public schools, the right to a quality education, the right to speak Spanish, and the creation of Mexican American curriculum in high schools and colleges throughout the Southwest (J. Barrera 2004; Guajardo & Guajardo 2004; Martin 1991; Soldatenko 2003).

Also in the late 1960s national Mexican American organizations such as the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and the Mexican American Legal and Defense Educational Fund (MALDEF) rose to prominence. Founded in 1968 as a non-profit organization, the NCLR ranks among the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the U.S. NCLR works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans through its network of about 300 affiliated community based organizations. NCLR conducts research, policy analysis, and advocacy on five areas: assets/investments, civil rights/immigration, education, employment and economic status, and health.[11] MALDEF was established in 1968 as a public interest law and civil rights organization for Mexican Americans. MALDEF pursues three broad strategies to fulfill its mission: litigation, education, and advocacy (Sierra 1991: 62-63).

[11] http://www.nclr.org/section/about/. Retrieved on November, 7, 2008

Also in 1968, *El Centro de Acción Social Autónoma* (CASA) was founded. What distinguished CASA from the NCLR and MALDEF was it grassroots base and activists. CASA was one of the first Mexican American organizations that explicitly made a connection to the immigration issue. In other words, CASA was the first Chicano organization to provide undocumented immigrants with services ranging from immigration counseling to notary assistance. CASA also pushed the larger Chicano movement to adopt a more progressive position on immigrant rights issues. Chicano students, activists, and community organizers were influenced by CASA and began to develop a different perspective on immigration.

With established organizations like the NCLR, MALDEF, LULAC and other grassroots community based organization in place, Chicano activism on the issue of immigration moved forward in the decades of the 1970s and 1980s. One of the first attempts to pass immigration reform in the United States was by President Jimmy Carter in 1977. Carter's immigration reform package included the implementation of employer sanctions, stricter enforcement of the U.S.-Mexico border, and an adjustment of status or "amnesty" for undocumented immigrants in the United States. Opponents organized "Stop the Carter Plan," as it became called, and triggered a rebirth of Chicano activism among varied sectors (Sierra 1991; 1999). In October 1977, approximately 2,600 people from thirty-two states and México traveled to San Antonio, Texas, to attend the first National Chicano/Latino Conference on Immigration and Public Policy (Gutierrez 1995; Robinson 2007; Sierra 1999).

Mexican American organizations of the 1950s and 1960s and the Chicano movement questioned the value of assimilation and sought to increase awareness of the continuing inequality, discrimination, and exploitation of Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants. This period was characterized by emergent and potent Mexican American organizations, male leadership, and an array of tactics and strategies (i.e., marches, rallies, voter registration drives, lobbying) by activists and organizations. This was important for immigrant rights efforts that sprang in the 1990s by seasoned Chicano activists and a new cadre of organizations and immigrants.

Fifth Stage-1980s-1990s

The ongoing immigration from Mexico and Latin America as well as anti-immigrant sentiment marked the fifth stage. According to Magaña & Mejia (2004: 76) this period is characterized by three trends: the growth of Latino immigrants; the consolidation of a pan-ethnic Latino political movement that brings together increasingly heterogeneous Latino subgroups; and the reemergence of activism against anti-immigrant legislation. This new period witnessed the growing diversity of Latino subgroups, including Central American refugees who began arriving in the U.S. in the 1980s.

Latino activism of the 1980s centered on mobilizing for amnesty for undocumented immigrants. During the presidency of Ronald Reagan, Senator Alan K. Simpson (R-WY) and Representative Romano Mazzoli (D-KY) introduced new immigration legislation in March 1982. The Simpson-Mazzoli bill advocated employer

sanctions, a more restrictive legalization program than previous bills, and a revival of the "bracero" (guest-worker) program.[12] A march on May 19, 1984 to oppose the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill attracted 10,000 people in Los Angeles, the biggest crowd that had ever gathered in support of immigrants (Robison 2007: Sierra 1991; 1999). That march encouraged a nationwide coordination of immigrant rights efforts.

Latino activism on immigration reform evolved in several ways. Immigration reform began to follow more traditional or mainstream political strategies and priorities. National Mexican American organizations like MALDEF, LULAC, the NCLR, and the United Farm Workers (UFW) became known as the "big four" for the Mexican American position on immigration reform at the national level. These national organizations placed an emphasis on building power bases in Washington D.C., in order to influence policymakers more directly (Sierra 1991, 1999). The politics of immigration in 1986 marked a decisive point in the evolution of Mexican American political organizing. At this moment, Latino and Mexican Americans penetrated policymaking arenas to a much greater extent than ever before.

In 1986, President Reagan signed the Simpson-Mazzoli bill into law as the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). The major provisions under IRCA included employer sanctions for those who hired undocumented immigrants and an amnesty program for over a million undocumented immigrants. Although the "big four"

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[12] When the Depression ended and U.S society began to mobilize for WWII, federal policy toward immigrants from Mexico changed. In 1942, the U.S government turned to Mexico for workers and institutionalized the Bracero program. The Bracero program was initiated to permit contract laborers to work in agriculture ending in 1964 (See Mathew Garcia 2006)

took different stands on the employer sanctions, such as MALDEF assumed the most uncompromising position, all four understood that IRCA was a path toward legal status and eventual citizenship for undocumented immigrants in the U.S. (Sierra 1991).

The immigrant rights efforts following IRCA were characterized above all else by providing legal services. Lawyers, service providers, Catholic Charities, and organizations like the International Institute, One Stop Immigration, among many others were busy helping immigrants navigate the confusing federal instructions and figuring out the documents that applicants for legalization would need (Hondagenou-Sotelo and Salas 2009). These organizations spent their time in providing services for amnesty-legalization needs rather than lobbying efforts.

The generation who had honed their organizing skills in the Chicano Movement and the post-1986 IRCA generation came together in the 1990s against anti-immigrant legislation (Fox 2010: 8; Navarro 2005). In 1994, these two generations came together to challenge California's proposition 187 in a pan-Latino protest movement. In that year, pro-immigrant rights marches ensued in California cities, including high school students who walked out of middle school and H.S school (Robinson 2007: 96).

The rise of Latin American migrant hometown associations (HTA's) is a new feature of this period, what Fox and Bada (2011) calls "civic binationality."[13] Hometown associations are grassroots organizations formed by Mexican migrants in the United States. These associations are based on the social networks that migrants from the same

[13] "Civic binationality" refers to practices that are engaged both with US civic life and with migrants' communities and countries of origin while "migrant civil society" refers to migrant-led membership organizations and public institutions (which may not be engaged with communities of origin) See Fox & Bada 2011

town or village in Mexico establish in their new U.S communities (Rivera-Salgado 2006). HTAs were formed in the 1980s in metropolitan areas and by the 1990s HTAs and state federations became the most prevalent organizational type for Mexican migrant communities, as well as for migrants from Central America (Rivera-Salgado, Bada, & Escala-Rabadán 2005). Latin American migrant HTA's sustain their commitments to their communities of origin by raising money to fund public works and social projects and working to improve their home communities in the U.S.[14] Currently, there are over 500 registered hometown associations formed by Mexican migrants in cities and towns throughout the U.S, the largest number of these are located in Chicago and Los Angeles (Bada et al., 2006).

Mexican American organizations have been changing, adjusting and responding to the social, economic and political environment of their times. Mutual aid societies emerged in the early 1880s in the U.S. and provided the bedrock for the emergence of Mexican American organizations in the 1900s that followed an inclusionist and assimilationist framework up until the 1940s. This should not come as a surprise given the hostility, discrimination, and segregation of Mexican Americans. Organizations of this time wanted to be treated as first class citizens of the United States with all the rights and privileges of American citizenship. The 1950s and 1960s saw the emergence

[14] Hometown associations are similar to mutual aid societies of the early 1900s in their Mexican nationalist rhetoric, rejecting cultural assimilation, and the promotion of cultural and heritage activities such as annual celebration of patriotic holidays, and quinceañeras, They are different in that HTAs have a conservative approach in their activities of organizing to raise funds and carry out projects in their homelands. However, during the 1990s a shift within HTA's emerged. HTA's became increasingly engaged in civic and political issues, mobilizing in 1994 against proposition 187 and most notably in 2006 against HR 4437. (Rivera-Salgado et al., 2005). Mexican women in HTAs are marginalized and excluded from positions of agency and power (Goldring 2003), with regard to mutual aid societies, women were able to form their own. .

Mexican American organizations expressing pluralist themes of group pride, self-determination, militancy, and increased resistance to exploitation and discrimination. Leadership has been traditionally conferred to men and the Chicano Movement was no exception. Mexican American organizations of the 1960s became prominent actors of immigration reform of the mid 1980s becoming the Hispanic lobby in Washington D.C.

The importance of this staged is marked by the lobbying Hispanic organizations in Washington D.C., the work of community based organizations at the grassroots level, and the growing number of hometown associations across the U.S. All these were crucial for fighting anti-immigrant legislation of the 1990s. Were these actors central in mobilizing against house bill H.R. 4437 in the spring of 2006? What about movement leaders? Are the 2006 mobilizations led by one or a few leaders? Answers to these questions, suggest the emergence of a sixth stage in the history of Latino grassroots politics.

A Sixth Stage: The Start of A New Era?

I put forth a sixth stage in this rich legacy of Mexican American social justice struggles that is characterized by three factors: growing importance of immigrant rights coalitions, the lack of a male charismatic leader, and Latina led activism. Immigrant Rights Coalitions (IRCs) are becoming widespread throughout the U.S. mobilizing massive and interregional grassroots support. Five factors explain the widespread emergence of IRCs over the past two decades: 1) the passage of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), 2) local law enforcement collaboration with

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), 3) worksite enforcement actions, 4) anti-immigrant legislation, and 5) an increase of Latino immigrants in non-traditional settlement states. As I discuss in detail in chapter three, the rise of these coalitions was integrally connected to the massive mobilizations of 2006 (see chapter three for a detailed analysis). For now, it suffices to point out that these coalitions mark the emergence of a new form of organizing.

Several Latino men received extensive media coverage during the 2006 pro-immigrant rights mobilizations, making themselves more noticeable in the movement. Jorge Mujica and Jose Artemio Arreola from *Movimiento 10 de marzo* in Chicago, Juan José Gutiérrez from *Movimiento Latino USA* in Los Angeles, Armando Navarro from the National Alliance for Human Rights (NAHR) in Los Angeles, Nativo Lopez and Raul Murillo from *Hermandad Mexicana Nacional* (HMN) and Spanish-language radio personalities like Renán Almendárez Coello "El Cucuy"/ the Bogeyman, Eduardo Sotelo "El Piolín"/ Tweetybird, Ricardo Sanchez "El Mandril"/the Baboon and "El Pistolero." These men received print and news coverage both in the mainstream and Spanish media during the 2006 pro-immigrant marches as well as in 2007 and 2008. However, not one of them can fairly be described as *the* leader of the immigrant rights movement and even taken together they do not represent the movement leadership.[15]

Unlike Corky González, Reies López Tijerina, José Angel Gutiérrez, and César Chávez who are canonical figures of the Chicano Movement, the men represented in the

[15] The absence of male leadership is not problematic; on the contrary, this indicates that the IRM is decentered. Latinas have a long history of activism but what is new is that there role is more visible precisely because there is no clear male leader.

Spanish language media do not have the status of movement leaders and many are not involved in grassroots organizations but rather work for the establishment like Univision or national non-profit organizations. The Mexican senator Raymundo Cárdenas described the movement and its leadership to the U.S. Spanish newspaper La Opinión (2006) as lacking a male leader when he said " there is not a Hispanic Martin Luther King; therefore, this movement has to be a group. The Martin Luther King of this movement will be collective." Armando Vázquez Ramos professor of Chicano/Latino Studies at Cal State Long Beach, echoed the same sentiment when he said "there's not a single person that can have all the leadership of this grand movement, because this movement comes from the grassroots and not from one sector" (Truax, 2006). Pallares (2010: 54) succinctly captures the lack of a leader in the Immigrant Rights Movement (IRM) when she says "the immigrant rights movement does not have a single voice but rather a plethora of voices."

Latinas have always taken a central role and voice in social justice issues for the betterment of the community and society at large. Emma Tenayuca (1916-1999) was a *mujer* who led Mexican workers' movements in Texas, in particular organizing farm workers in San Antonio, Texas in the 1930s (Ruiz, 1998). Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers union is a contemporary activist for farm workers throughout the United States. Other *mujeres* who are not as renown in the public eye but have received scholarly attention by Chicana/Latina scholars include Aurora Castillo and

Juana Gutiérrez, co-founders of *Mothers of East Los Angeles* (MELA) (Pardo, 1998).[16] Other community activists include, María Jiménez, a longtime immigrant rights defender who worked as director for several in immigrant rights projects for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). Most recently María Jiménez joined Houston's Centro de Recursos para Centroamericanos (Central American Resource Center, or CRECEN). Isabel García, an attorney and co-chair of *Coalición de Derechos Humano*s in Arizona is a community organizer that has worked for over twenty years on immigrant rights. García received the 2006 National Human Rights Award from Mexico's National Commission for Human Rights and won the Lannan Foundation Cultural Freedom Award in 2008.[17] Angélica Salas, executive director from the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) is another long-time activist for immigrant rights. Salas was recognized in 2008 by the Hispanic Business magazine as one of the 100 most influential Latinas. Salas organization is part of the steering committee for Reform Immigration for America (RIFA).

Within national non-profit organizations, Latina heads of powerful non-profits are taking a new and central role in advancing the immigrant rights movement. For example, Antonia Hernández was the former president for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). Currently, Janet Murguía is the President and CEO of

[16] MELA was established in 1986 as a grassroots environmental justice organization composed of predominantly Mexican American and Mexican immigrant women.
[17] Democracynow.org. "Legal Defender Isabel García: Arizona Bill Forcing Officers to Determine Immigration Status Marks "All-Out Assault" on Latino Communities." (http://www.democracynow.org/2010/4/16/az

the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and Margaret Morán is the National President of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC).

The aforementioned Latinas have done remarkable work at the local, state, and national level but they do not represent the work being done at the grassroots (exceptions include CHIRLA & Coalición de Derechos Humanos). In 2006 and 2007 the names of two undocumented Latinas made national headlines in the immigrant rights movement; Elvira Arellano and Flor Crisostomo. Both Arellano and Crisostomo took sanctuary in a church to avoid deportation and advocated for immigration reform. Elvira Arellano became a national symbol of the strength and resistance that millions of families face daily to stay in this country (Martinez 2010). Her courageous act of civil disobedience "forcefully challenged immigration authorities to storm the premises and apprehend her" (De Genova and Peutz 2010: 35). Elvira Arellano sought sanctuary at the Adalberto United Methodist Church in Chicago in 2006, but when she left the church to speak at a rally in California in 2007, she was arrested by U.S. Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) and deported to Mexico (Aizenman and Hsu 2007).

Arellano was aptly depicted as "perhaps the most famous undocumented immigrant" in the United States (Terry 2007). This was echoed by Rev Walter L. Coleman founder of Adalberto United Methodist Church, when he said that Arellano "remains one of the only publicly known undocumented leaders of the largest mass

movement in the history of this country." [18] Succinctly, Martinez (2010: 128) says that Arellano

> Symbolized the essence of the pro-immigrant community's stance: family values and unification; the right to work and live in the U.S. with dignity; and humane immigration reform. Perhaps unknowingly, she also embodied women's agency as their private roles were transformed into public ones as a means for bringing about social change.

There are countless more Elviras and Flors in the Immigrant Rights Movement whose stories have not been told and who deserve scholarly attention examining their participation in the 2006 mobilizations and current activism in the IRM. There is something different about the immigrant rights activism of today. There is a break with the long past of immigrant/Latino activism. This break can be found in the role of a new kind of organizing and a new kind of leadership. In this era of immigrant rights movement that seemingly lacks centralized male leadership, Latinas are at the forefront as leaders who focus on the relational dimensions of activism, the instrumental role of building connections across diverse organizations and adherents.

In this chapter I outlined and built on the five- stage framework of Latino grassroots politics by Magaña and Mejica (2004) to argue that there is a rich historical legacy of Mexican American struggle and activism but also something new in the recent mobilizations. By contextualizing and understanding this historical legacy we can

[18] Rev. Walter L. Coleman. 2008. "statement in Defense of the New Sanctuary Movement" http://www.gcorr.org/atf/cf/%7B9412EEAA-507B-4DDB-8168-B750F1B8A277%7D/Walter_Coleman_Defense_of_New_Sanctuary_Movement.pdf

appreciate its influence on the 2006 pro-immigrant rights marches and the novelty of these mobilizations. In the following chapter, I present my research methodology.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I discuss the research methodology that guides this dissertation. I begin by describing the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) and the Austin context. This is followed by the various methods of data collection that I undertook: participant observation, in-depth interviews, and archival research. I end by discussing my access to the field site and challenges that I faced during this research.

THE AUSTN IMMIGRANT RIGHTS COALITION (AIRC)

With the aim of exploring the past, current, and future direction of immigrant rights coalitions, in particular, the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC), I undertook a two-year long in-depth study of the experiences of immigrants, and allies who were involved with AIRC. The AIRC was an ideal coalition for a case study because of its organizational history (timing, nature of formation, etc.), and the population in Austin.

Around the time I developed my research several organizations in Austin were working with immigrants providing an array of services from workers compensation to leadership trainings. Some of these organizations include *Inmigrantes Latinos en Acción*, American Friends Service Committee, Workers Defense Project, Catholic Charities, American Gateways (formerly called Political Asylum Project of Austin-PAPA). However, there was not a single coalition bringing together the different sectors involved in work with and by immigrants (churches, organizations, student groups, grassroots groups, etc.).

Developing a case study about immigrant rights formation was timely and relevant. The number of Immigrant Rights Coalitions (IRCs) proliferated in 2006. There was an explosion of IRCs in 2006, responding to the threat of house bill H.R. 4437 (see chapter four). It was important for me to understand the emergence of IRCs throughout the U.S in a broader movement context while at the same time not losing sight of the micro level of analysis. Hence, the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition helped situate and understand the intricacies of IRC formation at the local level.

The Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition is located in Austin, Texas. Texas is one of the states with the largest number of documented and undocumented immigrants in the United States. [19] The immigrant population in Austin started to grow rapidly in the 1990s. It is likely to continue to grow as Austin continues to develop as an important immigrant destination.[20] During the 1990s, foreign-born residents rapidly began to account for a greater share of Austin's total population. Austin is located in Travis Country. The large majority of Travis County's immigrants arrived in the U.S. in or after 1990. Between 1990 and 2005 Travis County experienced a 230% increase in its foreign-born population (from 45,080 to 148,239). In 2005, about half (51% or approximately 76,000) of the immigrants living in Travis County were born in Mexico.[21] In Travis County, immigrants

[19] According to immigration statistics of the United States Department of Homeland Security, after California, New York, and Florida, Texas is the main recipient of both documented and undocumented immigration. See the Yearbook of Immigration Statistics 2008 (http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2008/ois_yb_2008.pdf) http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics/yearbook/YrBk03Im.htm.

[20] Singer, A. Susan W. Hardwick, & Brettnell, C. B. (2008). *Twenty-First Century Gateways:* Immigrants in Suburban America Migration Information Source.

[21] 2006-2007. Travis County Immigrant Assessment. Conducted by Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service

are represented among the lower income groups, and are more than twice as likely as native born persons to have no reported income. Almost one-quarter (23%) of immigrants live below the federal poverty level, compared to 14% of the native- born population. Two-thirds (66%) have individual incomes less than $25,000, compared with only 48% of the native born immigrants.[22]

The history of AIRC provides an interesting case to explore at the micro level the formation of an Immigrant Rights Coalition in an important and developing destination of new immigrants (see chapter 3 for detailed analysis). Like so many IRCs across the country, AIRC was founded in April of 2006 in response to and furthered the mobilizations across the country to oppose H.R. 4437.

Data Collection: Triangulation Approach

My dissertation research involves a triangulation approach. Triangulation is the term used to refer to the combination of different kinds of data, usually three. Triangulation of methods in social movement research offers analytic comprehensiveness and complexity (Blee & Taylor 2002: 112). I use participation observation, qualitative interviews, and archival research. The advantage of a triangulation approach is that it allows for the inclusion of the voices, perspectives, and experiences of the participants who are often times marginalized and invisible from academic discourse. Moreover, what we can draw from in-depth qualitative research is data on the intricacies and complexities

[22] American Community Survey, 2005

of the participants lives, which we would otherwise not have access to and about which little is known.

Participant Observation

Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995) note that ethnographic field research involves the study of groups and people as they go about their daily lives. I was a participant observer at AIRC from 2008-2010. I participated in the full range of the coalition's activities. This method advocates for a focus on naturally occurring discourse in daily social interaction, as opposed to gathering information solely through directed interviews (Lichterman 2002). Blee & Taylor (2002: 97) explain that being a participant can facilitate access to a social movement and promote the trust and rapport necessary for data collection. Having volunteered for a local immigrant rights organization since 2006 provided me access and brought me into contact with local non-profit organizations in Austin as well as access to the AIRC. This allowed me to develop rapport that I would have otherwise not been able to obtain. I began volunteering for the AIRC in March 2008 and joined the steering committee in January 2009. My active involvement in the organization's activities included attending and facilitating meetings with committees, and organizing marches, press conferences, action events, and celebrations.[23]

There are a number of responsibilities that steering committee members have, ranging from attending quarterly general assembly meetings, monthly steering committee

[23] The AIRC is comprised of four committees: The Policy Advocacy Committee, ICE out the Jail Committee, Raids Preparedness Committee, and the Welcoming Initiative. These are discussed in detail in chapter 5

meetings (as well as "extraordinary meetings"), set the mission and vision of the organization, ensure the coalition's programs falls within the mission and vision of the organization, ensure adequate resources, etc. Nonetheless, the task that I personally found myself involved in the most was the emotional work. In the vernacular Spanish I was often times *el paño de lagrimas/*handkerchief of tears for many immigrants who not only shared their issues with the coalition but also their own personal struggles as both documented and undocumented immigrants trying to carve a space in U.S. society. Being an "insider" as a steering committee member allowed me to examine the organizational level of the coalition and understand it within the context of the membership base (Naples 2003). I was explicit about my involvement with AIRC and my ongoing research as a graduate student at the Sociology Department in the University of Texas at Austin.

Although not part of my steering committee responsibilities, I was involved in the grassroots or base work of AIRC, the planning and implementation of various activities including the 2008 and 2009 Marches for May 1st, the Convention on Immigration Reform on February 20th, in 2010 and helping Caroline Keating-Guerra, former AIRC coordinator with administrative and other on-demand tasks related to the Immigration Reform Committee of AIRC. Specifically, the activities included helping facilitate and organize May 1st march and rally, create and translate materials (press releases, donation letters, etc), making certificates, to grassroots fundraising. My direct participation in these activities allowed me to gather data about the interpersonal relationships among the

membership, the members 'views and concerns about the AIRC, their feelings about immigration reform, and their fears, frustrations and hopes about life in the U.S.

In-Depth Interviews

This qualitative research is also based on fifty-two in-depth interviews with students, allies, community activists, heads of non-profit organizations, and service providers who have either collaborated with the AIRC or who have significant knowledge of the coalition and its work. I deliberately interviewed individuals and heads of grassroots organizations who are involved in the immigrant community but who are not part of the AIRC membership of organizations to understand why they are not involved with the coalition. Some organizations were "apolitical" with no connection with the AIRC; others had moderate ties showing-up sporadically to AIRC action events, while others had strong ties participating actively in the planning of events. I characterize the relationship between the AIRC and the organizations headed by these people as weak, moderate, or strong (see Appendix B).

The fifty-three interviewed represent a combination of 26 organizations, including social service agencies, churches, grassroots groups, and hometown associations (see Appendix A). The participants represent a diverse group based on age, race, social class, education, occupation, and immigration status. Participants were between the ages of twenty-two and sixty-four, the average age being thirty-five. Their education varies from a second grade education to holding a PhD (see Appendix A for characteristics of study participants).

Interviews were conducted from January 2009 through February 2010. I first began interviewing heads of non-profit organizations who I knew and with whom I had cultivated a relationship. This included heads of the American Friends Service Committee and *Inmigrantes Latinos en Acción.* I conducted my first interviews with leaders of these organizations as well as some of their board members. I then used a snowball sampling technique in which each respondent was asked to recommend another person who had participated in the early formation of the AIRC. This was corroborated with my archival research of the Austin American Statesman, a local newspaper in Austin, Texas that covered the protest events of 2006.

Interviews were conducted in person and over the phone, 50 in person and 2 over the phone. Face to face interviews were conducted in the respondent's home, coffee shops, restaurants, local libraries, offices, and one in my home. In-depth interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions in order to allow interviewees to elaborate on the topics that they found most important. Interviews lasted between one to two hours and were conducted in English or Spanish, depending on the preference of each participant. Riessman (1993) notes that during research interviews, respondents often hold the floor for lengthy runs and organize their responses into stories. This form of discourse, Coffey and Atkinson (1996: 57) observe, "is used in everyday interaction, the story is an obvious way for social actors, in talking to strangers (e.g., the researcher) to retell key experiences and events."

Some of the themes that I explored included participants' activism background (or lack thereof), experiences with local non-profit organizations, their awareness and

involvement with the AIRC and the 2006 marches (see Interview Guide, Appendix C & D). Since I am bilingual and bi-literate, the Spanish interviews were transcribed and then translated into English by me as presented in this text. All of the participants allowed the interviews to be tape-recorded. Two people were fine with me using their real names; the rest of the participants requested that I use pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. My dissertation places participants at the center of analysis. As much as possible, immigrant voices and the voices of women, as well as their thoughts and perspective, are used throughout this text through the use of field notes, quotes from interviews, and other print related material.

Archival Research

The Austin American Statesman, *Ahora Si*, and *El Mundo* are the key Austin newspaper sources in Spanish and English that inform this research. I retrieved articles from March 31, 2006 to May 18, 2008 from the *Austin American Statesman* to see how AIRC activities were covered. This initial search allowed me to identify several non-profit organizations and activists who were involved in the spring of 2006 marches. I also collected data from the newspaper database LexisNexis to map the existence of immigrant rights coalitions (IRC's) throughout the United States. Other online web resources include the community resource bank directory from the National Immigration Forum as well as coalitions listed in the website of the Bay Area Immigrant Rights Coalition (BAIRC) and the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR). This meso-level analysis of IRCs across the country has allowed me to place

my in-depth micro-analysis of the AIRC into a broader movement context. I also researched the websites, brochures, informative manuals, leadership development tool kits, publications and other materials of a number of immigrant rights coalitions outside of Austin.

ACCES TO THE FIELD AND SUBJECTS OF RESEARCH

My dissertation study was approved by Institutional Review Board of UT Austin in January 2009 and renewed in January 2010 and 2011 (IRC protocol #2009-01-0013). Throughout my research, I respected ethical and political considerations of research with human participants, specified in the "Policies and Procedures Manual of the University of Texas at Austin's Institutional Review Board." At the time of the interviews, I asked respondents to sign a consent form before our interview and fill out a demographic sheet. I informed participants of their right to withdraw at any point in time of the interview and/or refuse to answer questions. I began interviewing participants in January of 2009 and completed fifty-two interviews by February 2010.

Access

My academic interest in studying Latina(o)/Chicana(o) activism is rooted in my lived experience as a Mexican immigrant. I am passionate and committed to the immigrant rights struggle in the U.S. I got involved in immigrant rights when I was an undergraduate at San Jose State University in San Jose, California and since then have continued to volunteer my time for *la causa*—the cause. My experience in immigrant

rights activism became an asset to the organizations where I volunteered in Austin. One of the main methodological issues that researchers confront is obtaining access to the field and participants. Fortunately, I did not encounter this problem because prior to entering the field I had developed a relationship with two immigrant women leaders of the American Friends Service Committee and *Inmigrantes Latinos en Acción* where I volunteered since 2006.

I began my doctoral studies at UT Austin in the fall of 2005 and in the spring of 2006 through a mutual friend I heard about these two Latina immigrants' who were heads of American Friends Service Committee and *Inmigrantes Latinos en Acción* and working on social justice issues and immigrant rights. In the fall of 2006 I contacted the coordinator of *Inmigrantes Latinos en Acción* (ILA) to express my interest in volunteering and worked then with ILA until it closed its doors in 2010. Through ILA I encountered other organizations and learned about the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC). It was not until the spring of 2007 that I began attending AIRC meetings as a representative of ILA, but due to my advanced pregnancy and doctoral coursework I was unable to continue attending these meetings. This however, did not hinder my involvement and commitment with ILA. I did a lot of volunteer work from home, in particular researching and co-developing a Spanish immigrant resource guide for Latina(o) immigrants in Austin titled *Guia de Recursos para Inmigrantes en el Condado de Travis*/Immigrant Resource Guide for Immigrants in Travis County.

In the spring of 2008, I became more involved with the coalition, representing ILA in AIRC meetings and action events. That same year, Caroline Keating Guerra was

hired to be the new AIRC coordinator replacing Rebecca. I had known Caroline since the fall of 2006 after taking an indigenous rights course in the Latin American Studies program at UT and also a course on Civil Society in Puebla, Mexico. We also crossed paths at the Border Social Forum in Ciudad Juarez in 2006 when I went with a delegation from Austin and San Antonio, Texas.

Several months later, Caroline was looking for candidates to join the steering committee of the AIRC. Since at that time I had been involved with ILA for the last couple of years and was also going to AIRC meetings and activities, she asked me to consider representing ILA as an AIRC steering committee member. The main ideas of my dissertation research developed in the fall of 2008 and I expressed to Caroline my research interest in Chicana(o)/Latina(o) studies and doing research on immigrant rights coalitions for my dissertation. She granted me permission to study the AIRC and informed the steering committee that I would be joining as a representative of ILA and was also doing my dissertation research on the coalition. In January 2009, the coordinator signed a site letter from the UT Austin's Institutional Review Board giving her consent of my dissertation research on the coalition (See Appendix G). When I joined the steering committee in 2009 I reaffirmed to committee members and everyone else I interviewed my commitment to confidentiality in order to preserve their security. On March 2010 I gave a short presentation to the new cohort of steering committee members on my dissertation research. I did my best to be transparent about my research goals and informed the coordinator of my preliminary research findings on a regular basis.

Challenges

My involvement in the organization did not pose any significant problems; nonetheless, there was one important challenge that merits discussion. I was very cognizant of my social location and constantly questioned how this could shape the ways in which participants viewed and interacted with me. For example, how did my social location as an educated, documented Mexican immigrant shape my relationship with both immigrants and non-immigrants involved with the coalition work? It was my experience that in almost all cases immigrants were comfortable with interacting with me because of my status as an immigrant and as a person who shared many of the same histories of migration (e.g., language, culture, mixed status relatives [documented and undocumented], family separation). Class differences were mostly manifested in two aspects: immigration status and education. My documented immigration status and my status as a doctoral student and my ability to speak and write Spanish and English fluently differentiated me from monolingual immigrants and undocumented immigrants. In general however, I found that immigrants did not find discomfort in this and often asked me to interpret for them in meetings where there were monolingual English speakers. I was very conscious of my privilege in terms of my education, language, and immigration status and made every conscious effort to take a step back in not imposing my thoughts and ideas on a particular topic or project; this was particularity the case in the Immigration Reform Committee when we were planning the Conventions on Immigration Reform during the winter 2009 and early spring 2010 and in the march on May 1st 2010. The Immigration Reform Committee is a subcommittee of the AIRC that

formed specifically to organize the immigration convention in February 2010 and plan for the May 1st march.

My relationship with immigrants as an *inmigrante*, student, and steering committee member was something that I constantly had to negotiate and renegotiate. Nancy Naples (2003: 49) writes that:

> As ethnographers we are never fully outside or inside the "community"; our relationship to the community is never expressed in general terms but is constantly being negotiated and renegotiated in particular, everyday interactions; and these interactions are themselves enacted in shifting relationships among community residents. These negotiations are manifest in local processes that reposition gender, class, and racial-ethnic relations among other socially constructed distinctions.

Because I was conscious of the privileges that I possessed as an immigrant with formal education, I purposefully shied away from protagonist roles or the role of the researcher who knows what is best for the immigrant community (and also part of me personally inclined me to do so). This often times hindered me from fully participating in the committee meetings.

For example, in the planning for the Immigration Convention for Immigration Reform an increasing tension began brewing among immigrants, mainly based on interpersonal relationships and leadership styles. There was a small split within the committee and some immigrants were meeting on separate days. Rumors began circulating that some members were having their own meetings and gossiping about other members. Being aware of my social location, I took a step back and did not intervene but

I also felt the need to mediate the situation as I believed that the split would cause the breakdown of the committee only weeks away from the convention. Nancy Naples (2003:63) notes that "emotions are always present in personal interactions in ethnographic work," so I decided to share my feelings with the coordinator who told me that I should express my own thoughts and point of view at the reform committee meetings. This was helpful as it allowed me to feel a little bit more at ease with the situation. Another way that I coped with the aforementioned challenges was by reminding myself that the richness of qualitative research methods and the benefits of participatory, activist research, would allow me to research the hard-to-study but crucially important issue of the role of immigrant rights coalitions and their relationship with organizations and immigrant communities.

Another minor challenge I encountered in conducting this dissertation research was the inclusion of sensitive data. Even if I had obtained informed consent by the coordinator there was information that I considered to be too confidential or compromising to be used in my writing. For example, internal tensions between certain individuals both in the AIRC membership and steering committee emerged while doing my fieldwork. If these data were crucial to the analysis, I refer to them indirectly without exposing the participants in an unnecessary manner.

In the following chapter I provide evidence to show that the type of organizing that took place in 2006 centered around coalition formation giving rise to scores of Immigrant Rights Coalitions (IRCs).

CHAPTER 3: IMMIGRANT RIGHTS COALITIONS (IRCS)

In chapter three I employ a meso-level of analysis of Immigrant Right Coalition (IRC) formation to uncover the conditions that gave rise to IRCs throughout the U.S. My findings suggest that the vast majority of IRCs emerged as both cause and effect of the massive mobilizations in the spring 2006.

Immigration policies

Over the past two decades, immigrants and Latinos in the United States have been targeted by a series of legislative bills aimed at restricting their rights as immigrants, both undocumented and documented. For example, in 1994, California approved proposition 187, which banned undocumented immigrants from the use of basic public services such as public schools, social services, and health care. Proposition 187 was later declared unconstitutional. In August 1996, Congress passed welfare reform legislation, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) that imposed new restrictions on aid to documented as well as undocumented immigrants (Castañeda 2004; Reese 2005). In that same year, Congress approved the Illegal Immigration and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA), which made undocumented immigrants ineligible for non-emergency public aid. The main provisions focused on the issue of undocumented immigration by increasing border enforcement and requiring employers to check for the legality of the papers presented by workers (Phillips, Hagan, & Rodriguez 2006).

In 2004, Arizona voters approved Proposition 200, a similar measure to California's Proposition 187. This bill requires employees of state and local agencies to verify the immigration status of benefits applicants, and to report immigration law violations to the Department of Homeland Security. Within a year of Proposition 200's passage, more than twenty states had introduced approximately eighty bills aimed at restricting benefits for undocumented immigrants (American Immigration Lawyers Association 2008: 7). In December of 2005 Congressman James Sensenbrenner from Wisconsin introduced the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 or House Bill H.R. 4437. The legislation passed the House of Representatives in late 2005 but it failed to pass the Senate. Had H.R. 4437 been passed, it would have defined undocumented immigrants and those who aid them as *felons*.

The most recent case of anti-immigrant legislation that has received local and national attention is Arizona SB 1070. Arizona Governor Jan Brewer signed SB 1070 into law on April 23, 2010. This piece of legislation makes it a crime under state law to be in the country undocumented. It also requires local police officers to question people about their immigration status if there is reason to suspect they are undocumented; it allows lawsuits against government agencies that discourage enforcement of immigration laws, among other provisions (Davenport & Cooper 2010). On April 30, the Governor Jan Brewer signed HB 2162 which modifies SB 1070 to prohibit racial profiling, but the bill has nonetheless instilled fear among both documented and undocumented immigrants and a distrust of police officers.

Scholars observe that immigrants' experience in the U.S. is shaped by the receiving country's immigration policies and popular perception of immigrants (Garni & Miller 2008; Segal, Mayadas, & Elliott 2006). Segal and colleagues (2006: 12) write that immigrants are seen as assets to the receiving country or as "threats that deplete it of resources and endanger the opportunities of the natives." Anti-immigrant measures not only affected the lives of immigrants but also shaped the trajectory of the advocacy of service providers, non-profit organizations, and immigrant rights coalitions.

Emergence of Immigrant Rights Coalitions (IRCs)

Immigrant-serving and advocacy organizations play a central role during all parts of the immigration process and in the social, cultural, and political adaptation and incorporation of immigrants (Cordero-Guzmán 2005). They play an important role in adaptation to anti-immigrant measures at the national and local level. In particular, Immigrant Rights Coalitions (herein after referred to as IRCs), have been key in mobilizing immigrants in response to an increasingly hostile political environment. IRCs are composed of actors from different sectors ranging from immigrant communities, grassroots organizations, public officials, labor unions, faith based groups, to univeristy faculty and students. An IRC advocates, and/or mobilizes around, immigrant, refugee, and human rights issues at the local, state, and/or national level. An IRC is a not-for-profit organization and can have a 501(c)(3) status. An IRC can be a short-term ad-hoc coalition but it must have organized at least one action event (i.e., rally, march, vigil,

lobby). IRCs are fast forming and fast evolving, they exist when they actually organize an action event.

Although increasingly important organizational actors in the Immigrant Rights Movement, we know surprisingly little about IRCs. My research suggests that five conditions help explain the emergence of IRCs: 1) the passage of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), 2) local law enforcement collaboration with ICE, 3) worksite raids, 4) anti-immigrant legislation, and 5) an increase of Latino immigrants in non-traditional settlement states.[24] I turn to a discussion of each of these conditions.

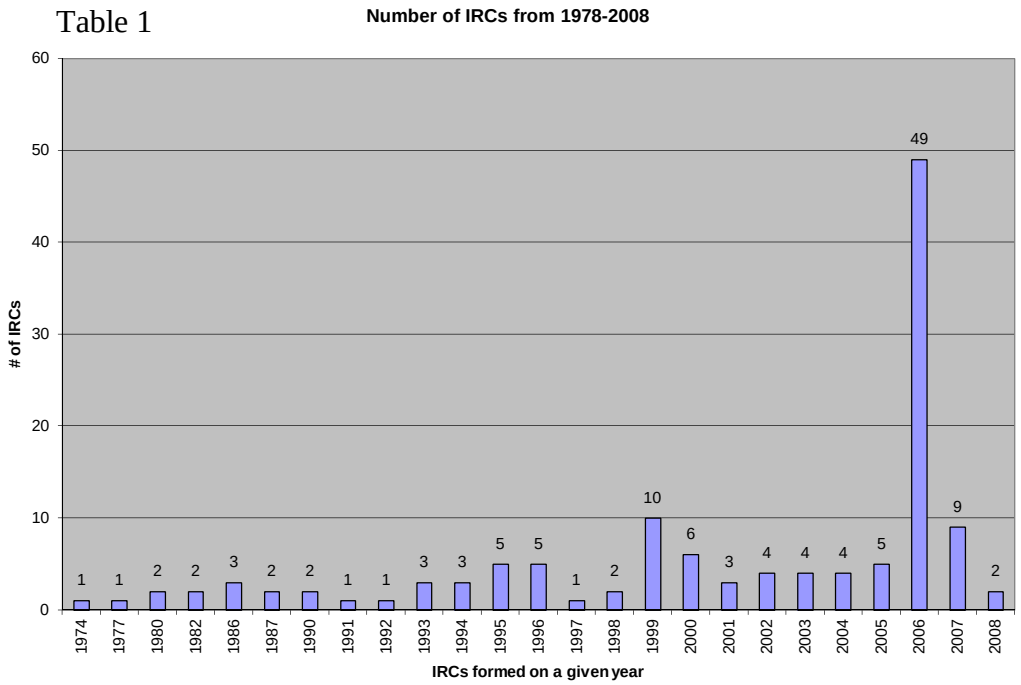
As of 2009, there are over 132 Immigrant Rights Coalitions (IRCs) in over 36 U.S. states and probably many smaller ones that have not been counted (Jiménez 2009).[25] Table 1 shows the steady growth in IRCs from the 1980s, to the early part of the twenty first century. In the early 1980s there were roughly 9 IRCs. By 1996 there were 32.[26]

[24] Another condition that merits further research is the incorporation of immigrants. Immigration scholars argue that the longer immigrants are in the U.S. the more likely they are to incorporate into society and become socially engaged.

[25] Four cases were dropped because I was unable to find out the date of IRC formation.

[26] In this study, I am only referring to new IRCs created in those years. Counting immigration advocacy organizations is challenging given that conventional newspapers often fail to capture certain types of activities (Gleeson and Bloemraad).

Table 1



Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) reformed U.S. immigration law by granting amnesty to undocumented immigrants, making it illegal to knowingly hire or recruit undocumented immigrants, and requiring employers to verify employees' immigration status (Magaña & Mejia 2004). The passage of IRCA was the first major revision of America's immigration laws in decades. The implementation of IRCA in the late 1980s allowed immigrants to move legally and seek jobs and cheaper housing in areas of the country that were experiencing rapid economic growth. IRCA also increased enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border, contributing to the dispersion of the Latino population (Massey, Durand, & Malone 2002). Organizations ranging from churches, community based organizations, and service providers, to national organizations were faced with the task of helping immigrants navigate the legalization process (Hondagneu-

Sotelo & Salas, 2008). For example, Hagan & Baker (1993) document how community-based organizations and local government officials responded to IRCA's legalization provision. In their research in Houston, Texas, they found that a network of organizations were granted the Qualified Designated Entity (QDE) by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to pre-process legalization applications, and to accompany immigrants to their legalization interviews.

With the passage of IRCA several IRCs were formed like the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) and the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA). CHIRLA emerged in 1986 to respond to IRCA and since then has worked on issues ranging from establishing the first day laborer centers in the country to participation in local, state, and public policy initiatives.[27] The New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) was formed a year after IRCA. Since its founding in 1987, NYIC has analyzed the impact of immigration policy proposals, worked to promote and protect the rights of immigrants and to mobilize member groups to respond to issues and needs facing immigrants and refugees.[28]

A *second* condition related to the formation of IRCs is U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) collaboration with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The federal government has turned to state and local enforcement agencies to aid federal efforts to enforce immigration law (American Immigration Lawyers Association 2008; Chiu, Egyes, Markowitz, & Vasandani 2009; Guttin 2010). The

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[27] http://www.chirla.org/node/17. Retrieved on June 10, 2009

[28] http://www.thenyic.org/content.asp?cid=20. Retrieved on June 10, 2009

Criminal Alien Program (CAP) is one of fourteen federal/local law enforcement programs under the umbrella of ICE ACCESS (Agreements in Cooperation in Communities to Enhance Safety and Security).[29] Participation in CAP means state and federal prisons, as well as local jails, share inmate information with ICE and allow ICE agents access to penal facilities in order to interview suspected deportable immigrants.[30]

Lawyers such as Andrea Guttin (2010) write that the CAP program has a negative impact on communities because it increases the community's fear of reporting crime to police, it encourages racial profiling and it is also costly. A recent report conducted by Guttin (2010: 4) on the background on the CAP program and its implementation in Travis County, Texas, reveals that

> from the time ICE increased its presence in Travis County in September 2007 to the end of that year, there were more detainers placed than in the previous eight months of the year. The final four months of 2007 showed a 152 percent increase over the last third of 2006. Compared to the annual total for 2006, 2007 saw a 70 percent increase in the number of detainers. This pattern of growth continued in 2008, resulting in a 119 percent increase in detainers over 2007. This percentage translates to 2,062 individuals placed under detainer—the highest number in the eight years of data reviewed.

Guttin's concerns of the effects of the CAP program in Travis County is also echoed by the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition which opposes this collaboration because it undermines trust between law enforcement and the immigrant community; it

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[29] ICE website, "ICE ACCESS," available www.ice.gov/partners/dro/iceaccess.htm.. Retrieved on May 18, 2010

[30] http://www.ice.gov/partners/lenforce.htm. Retrieved on January 3, 2009

opens the door to violations, as well as the racial profiling of immigrants (Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition 2008a). Local collaboration with ICE is not unique to Travis County or Texas but is occurring across the country. CAP is active in all state and federal prisons, as well as more than 300 local jails throughout the country.[31]

A *third* condition in the formation of IRCs is raids or what ICE calls "worksite enforcement actions." In the early 1990s, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) expanded its employer sanction activities, including raiding U.S. workplaces to search for undocumented workers (Donato, Aguilera, & Wakabayashi 2005; GoffWilson 2008).[32] In the last ten years ICE has intensified workplace raids in both interior and border communities (Heyman, Morales, & Núñez 2009). ICE has targeted large meatpacking plants, poultry farms, construction sites, and other low-wage industries. The overwhelming majority of arrested workers have been Mexicans, Guatemalans and Salvadorans (Catholic Legal Immigration Network 2008).

Workplace raids became widespread following the 2006 immigrant rights protests against the House bill H.R. 4437. Since December 2006, at least 28 states have been impacted by immigration worksite raids. For instance, in December 12, 2006, simultaneous raids of Swift & Company meat-processing plants took place in Colorado, Nebraska, Texas, Utah, Iowa, and Minnesota resulting in almost 1,200 arrests (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, September 27, 2007). Again, on April 16, 2008,

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[31] Fact Sheet, "Secure Communities," March 28, 2008. ICE claims to have a presence in 10 percent of approximately 3,100 jails nationwide.

[32] The INS was disbanded and reorganized as part of the Department of Homeland Security in March 2003. The agencies now responsible for immigration are the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

ICE conducted simultaneous raids of Pilgrim's Pride chicken-processing plants in Texas, Florida, Tennessee, Arkansas, and West Virginia resulting in arrests of more than 280 workers (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, April 16 2008). In August of that same year ICE conducted the largest raid in U.S. history in Laurel, Mississippi at Howard Industries, where over 595 workers were arrested (Catholic Legal Immigration Network, 2008). According to the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (2008), there have been 42 raids from 2006 to 2008 and at least 7 states have experienced more than one worksite raid. These include: California (5); Illinois (4); Hawaii (3); Arkansas (3); Ohio (2); Maryland (2); Mississippi (2).

Coalitions like *Deporten a la Migra* emerged to protest against worksite raids. *Deporten a la Migra* is a coalition of community-based organizations that serve, educate, and empower immigrant communities in San Francisco, California. The coalition was formed in the summer of 2004 after an ICE raid in a building in the Mission District.[33] *Deporten a la Migra* continues to organize against ICE raids and advocate for drivers' licenses for immigrants regardless of their immigration status (Bayard 2005). *Alianza Latinoamericana por los Derechos de los Inmigrantes* (ALDI) is another coalition based in San Francisco that formed in 2007 to respond to raids. Following the raids of 2004, ALDI opened 5 telephone lines that operated 24 hours a day so that immigrants could call in and report abuses or violations.[34] In 2007, three weeks after a round of raids, the Redwood City Immigrant Rights Coalition was formed. The

33 http://sanfrancisco.going.com/event-238646;Deporten_a_la_Migra_Fundraiser_PST# Retrieved on July 16, 2009

34 http://alianzalatinoamericana.org/about.html, Retrieved on October 5, 2008

coalition's aim is to make Redwood City and San Mateo County, California a safe haven for undocumented immigrants (Manekin 2007).

A *fourth* condition related to the formation of IRCs is a response to the backlash of anti-immigrant legislation. For example, the Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights (ICIR) was formed in 1994 in response to Proposition 187 in California. ICIR has grown into a network of over 1,000 congregations, denominations, organizations, lay and religious leaders throughout the state.[35] In 1995, Oregon's Immigrant Rights Coalition was founded to defeat an anti-immigrant ballot measure that was patterned after California's Proposition 187. The year 2006 also saw an explosion in the number of coalitions throughout the country to oppose the anti-immigrant bill, H.R. 4437. The argument here is not that IRCs first emerged in 2006, but that the dramatic rise of coalitions in 2006 demonstrates that in this year it became a common method of organizing and mobilizing immigrants and allies against political threats. The following are a few of the many IRCs that formed in 2006: *Coalición Somos America*, March 25 Coalition, Movement for Immigrant Rights Alliance (MIRA), the Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (KCIRR), the Boston College May Day Coalition, Harvard May Day Coalition, the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition.

The IRCs that formed in 2006 were made up of community based organizations, activists, religious groups, labor, and hometown associations (Giraldo, León, & Contreras 2006; Watanabe & Becerra 2006). The Catholic Church, radio, unions, immigrant service providers, and non-profit organizations were important galvanizing actors that

[35] http://icir.igc.org/index2.html. Retrieved on July 13, 2009

helped mobilize immigrants across the country (Ayón 2006; Benjamin-Alvarado, DeSipio, & Montoya 2007; Manzano, Ramírez, & Rim 2007; Marks, Nuño, & Sanchez 2007). The reliance on coalition structures is different from mobilizations of the past. The new organizational infrastructure of immigrant coalitions reflects the more geographically dispersed social reality of immigrants in America.[36]

This leads to my *fifth* condition explaining the formation of IRCs, the increase in the immigrant population in "new destinations" (Massey & Capoferro 2008; Zuñiga & Hernandez-Leon 2005). Helen Marrow (2009: 756) observes two trends that have changed contemporary U.S. immigration; the growth of the undocumented population (11 to 12 million in 2008) and immigrants, primarily Mexicans, have dispersed geographically to new destinations that have had little prior experience with immigrants. Before the 1990s Mexican migration in particular was largely seasonal and circular where most immigrants entered the country to work in the agricultural fields and returning to Mexico after finishing the harvest (Durand et al 2000). However, since the 1980s, Mexican immigrants have settled in regions other than the traditional border states of Texas and California.

A case in point, St. Louis, Missouri witnessed a considerable growth in the Latino population. The International Institute of St Louis (2010) observes that Latinos represent approximately two percent of the total population. Segel's (2008) exploratory study on Mexican migration to St. Louis, Missouri reveals that immigrants are drawn to

[36] Mobilizing for immigration reform has its origins from the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) and the 1994 marches against proposition 187 in California. Renewed efforts to push for immigration reform were made in the spring of 2006

St. Louis because of the large demand for low-wage labor, immigrant social networks of family and friends, and the medium size of the town. Segel's interviewees also said that economic opportunities and a growing Mexican/Hispanic community made the St Louis region an attractive place to live. Similarly, Middleton (2009: 380) finds that Bosnian immigrants settle in St. Louis "because of the strong support networks offered by charitable organizations and contacts with Bosnian immigrants who had preceded them in relocating to the area." According to Olivia Miller (2000), in the early 1990s, there were less than 1,000 Bosnian immigrants in St. Louis and by 1998 the population had reached 8,000 (Miller 2000).

Several IRCs in this study emerged precisely to meet the needs of the increasing immigrant population in new destinations and to address xenophobia against immigrants in these places. Take the case of the Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (HICA) that formed in 1999. Alabama is the state with the 38th-largest Latino population, currently there are 84,021 (1.9 percent) Latinos in Alabama (U.S. Census 2000), but the population is growing. The Latino population is also growing in the state of Mississippi. Latinos in Mississippi make up 2.2% of the population (U.S. Census 2000). The Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance (MIRA), formed in 2000 in response to the needs of the rapidly growing Latino immigrant population in Mississippi. Besides Mississippi, the Latino population in North Carolina also grew, primarily immigrants from Mexico, skyrocketing from 76,726 in 1990 to 378,963 in 2000 (McClain et al. 2003). The arrival of Latinos to North Carolina has been attributed to the growth of the construction and service industries and the restructuring of the meat and poultry industries (Drever 2006;

Smith & Furuseth 2006b). The *Coalición de Organizaciones Latino-Americanas* was formed out of a need for a Latino-led organization in rural Western North Carolina mountain counties.

Tennessee also witnessed a growth in the Latino population. Most Latinos settle in Tennessee's two largest cities but the places experiencing the greatest proportional shifts are medium-sized towns where industry and food processing companies are located (Drever 2006; Winders 2008). To address this growing diversity in 2001 the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC) was founded. TIRRC notes on their website that between 1990 and 2005, Tennessee experienced the fourth fastest rate of immigrant growth of any state in the country. Since its founding, TIRRC has worked on projects ranging from leadership building, organizational capacity building, know-your-rights trainings, civic and voter engagement (Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition 2009).

IRCs are also found in Minnesota and Kentucky. Factors such as immigration from Mexico and other Latin American countries, high birth rates, and migration from other states have contributed to the growth in the Latino population in Minnesota (Department of Research Planning & Development 2007). The Midwest Coalition for Human Rights and the Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Coalition (MIRAC) are some of the coalition's found in the state of Minnesota.

Kentucky is the state with the 39th-largest Latino population. Barcus (2006) writes that the 1990s marked the beginning of a new era in cultural and ethnic diversity in Kentucky as the Hispanic population nearly tripled to become the second largest minority

group in the state. By 2000, Kentucky ranked among the top ten states in the U.S. with a rapidly growing Latino population (U.S. Census 2000). The presence of IRCs in Kentucky include the Kentucky Migrant Network Coalition, the Hispanic Initiative Network, and the Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (Rich & Miranda 2005).

Table 2 shows the geographical distribution of IRCs. Many are concentrated in the state of California; this is not surprising given the historical legacy of Latino activism and the birth of the Immigrant Rights Movement in that state. Nonetheless, IRCs are increasingly found in non-traditional settlement states or what immigration scholars call "new destinations" like Georgia, Minnesota, North Carolina, and cities like Phoenix, Las Vegas, Nashville to smaller towns throughout the southern and western regions of the U.S. (Donato and Bankston 2008; Griffith 2008; Hernandez-Leon and Zuñiga 2005; Masey and Capofero 2008).[37]

Local context matters in understanding why coalitions formed in some states and not in others and why coalitions died out but survived in other states. For one, the presence of the Catholic Church, labor unions, and the Spanish-language are unevenly dispersed across the U.S. Second, "Immigrant-friendly" U.S. institutions are stronger in some areas than in others, and Latino organizations and institutions vary greatly across cities and states (Bada, Fox, Donnelly and Selee 2010; Fox 2010:13)

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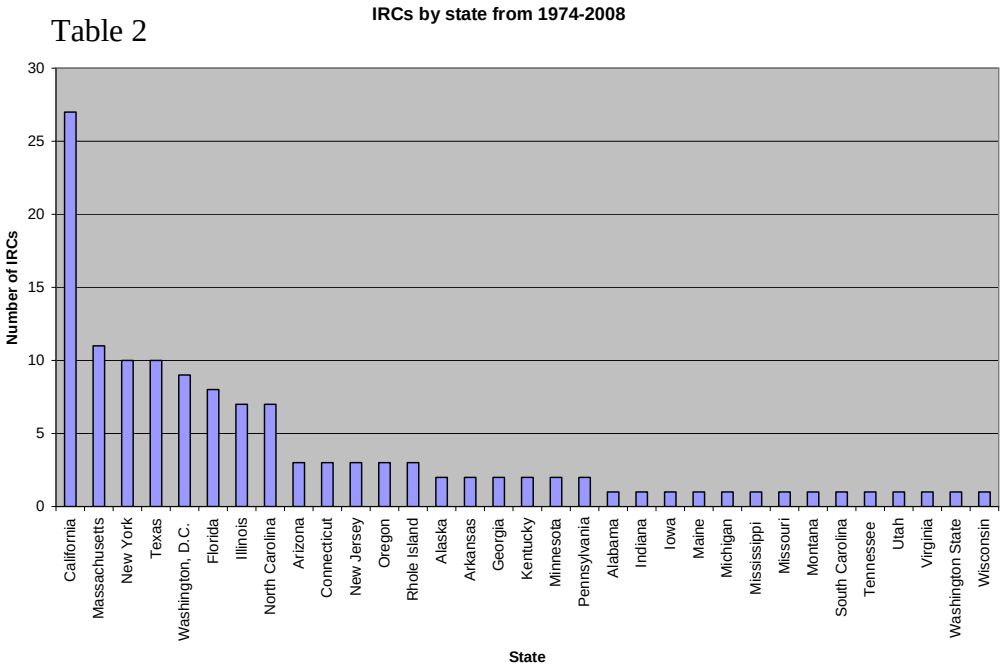
[37] Before the 1990s Mexican migration was largely seasonal and circular where most immigrants entered the country to work in the agricultural fields and returning to Mexico finishing the harvest (Durand, Massey and Charvet 2000). However, since the 1980s, Mexican immigrants have settled in regions other than the traditional border states of Texas and California (Durand, Massey and Charvet 2000).

Table 2



Heads of powerful Mexican American organizations have recognized the importance of coalitions. Cecilia Muñoz, former Senior Vice President of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) referring to the Coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CCIR) said that "never before have we brought together under one banner such a formidable political coalition to fight for passage of comprehensive immigration reform" (Stern and Rivlin 2007: 1).

Immigrant organizing has peaked during national anti-immigrant attacks in the United States (Benjamin-Alvarado, DeSipio, and Montoay 2008; Pallares and Flores-Gonzáles 2010). The 2006 mobilizations against Sensenbrenner bill followed this historical path. What is important about this turn in the Immigrant Rights Movement is that the political threat of house bill H.R. 4437 was national in scope; it mobilized supporters in both small and large cities throughout the country, from Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, to smaller cities and towns in Alabama, Kentucky, and Nebraska

(Alvarado, DeSipio and Montoya 2007). Second, the sheer numbers of protests and high number of people involved was unprecedented. Although there is no complete tally available, immigrant protests between February and May 2006 occurred in more than 150 cities and included between three and five million protestors (Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars 2007).

Table 3 shows the 2006 marches from February to May 1st 2006. Marches were reported on February 14 and slowly began increasing in mid-March. Nine marches were reported on Saturday, March 25, 13 by March 27 and skyrocketed to 87 on April 10, making it the highest number of marches on that day. The April 10 marches were part of a nationally orchestrated mobilization. Unlike previous mobilizations in the 1990s, these protests were both massive in scale and national in scope.

To stimulate national visibility for the 2006 mobilizations, Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM), a national coalition of organizations fighting for immigrant rights (with support from the Center for Community Change) encouraged immigrant organizations to conduct vigils, marches, events, and demonstrations on April 10. May 1 reported 73 marches less than April 10 (Cano, 2009). This is not shocking given the divisions over the boycott among organizers of the pro-immigrant rights rallies (Watanabe and Gorman 2006).[38]

[38] The March 25 Coalition proposed a march on May 1st as the Great American Boycott/A Day Without an Immigrant. This however, did not sit well with established Latino organizations, organized labor and the Catholic Church because the boycott was seen as anti-corporate (Gonzalez 2006) This lead to two marches on May 1, one organized by the March 25 Coalition and one by Somos America

Table 3

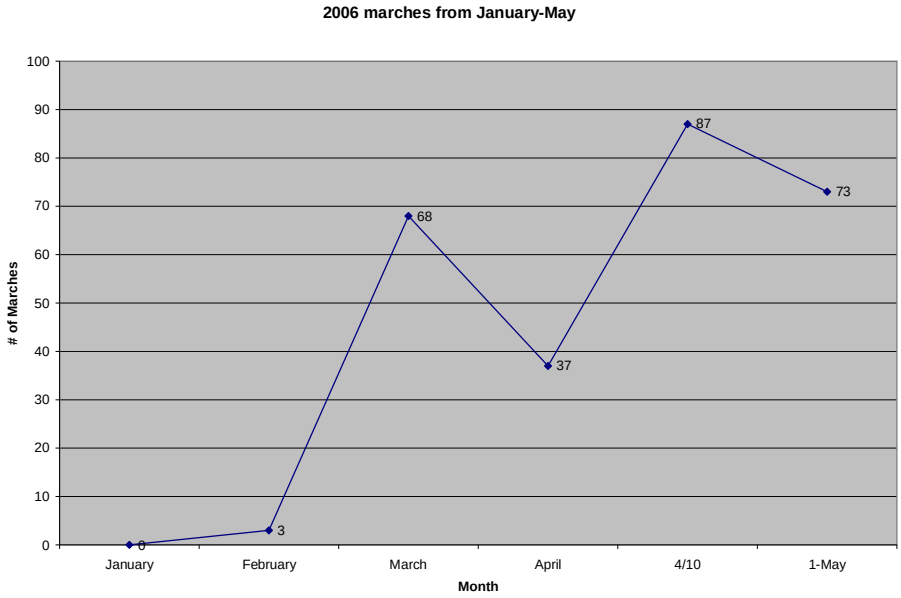
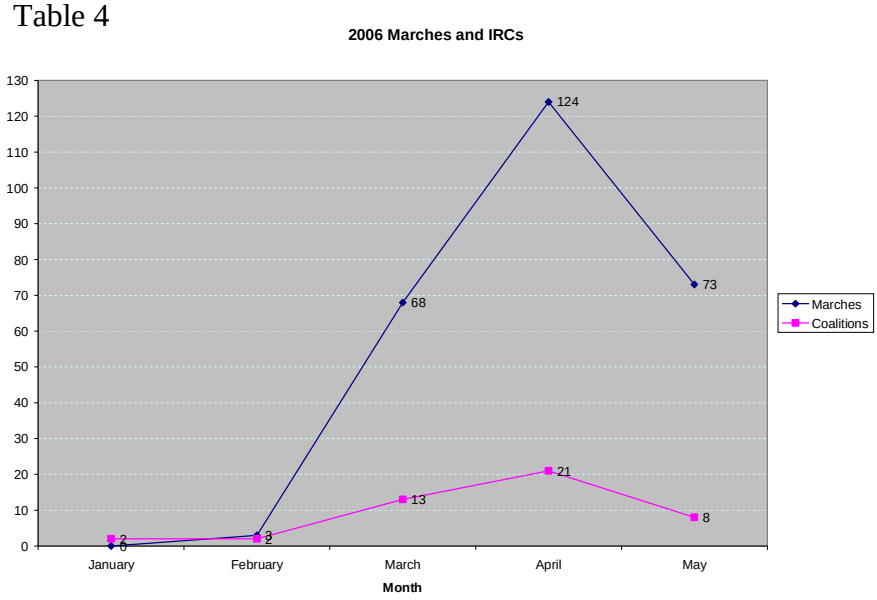


Table 4 looks closely at the data on the 2006 marches at the national level and formation of IRCs. A total of forty-six IRCs were formed between January and May: 2 in January, 3 in February, 12 in March, 21 in April, and 8 in May.[39] There is a strong correlation between the marches and the formation of new IRCs. This indicates that as the 2006 marches were unfolding across the country, IRC formation was also occurring. Organizers realized the power of coalitions to mobilize people and the organizational form spread to places far and wide as reflected by the formation of IRCs in April. Table 4 demonstrates the close correspondence between the 2006 marches and IRC formations.

[39] Three cases were dropped because the author was unable to find out the date of IRC formation

Table 4



IRCs that formed around the country in 2006 were shaped by the 2007 marches but also instrumental in pulling off these marches. For example, the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) formed in response to and was largely influenced by the mobilizations across the country, but it also furthered these mobilizations by orchestrating an important march in Austin. In chapter four, I discuss the three organization actors at the national level in the 2006 mobilizations and the paramount role of the AIRC in pulling off the marches in Austin, Texas.

CHAPTER 4: THE EMERGENCE OF "LA COALICIÓN"--THE AUSTIN IMMIGRANT RIGHTS COALITION (AIRC)

The new organizational form that is at the center of the contemporary Immigrant Rights Movement (IRM) is the Immigrant Rights Coalition (IRC). Chapter 4 explores the emergence of a particular IRC, the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition, to show the role of organizations like this coming to the fore. I begin by discussing the three formal organizational actors in the 2006 mobilizations, the Spanish speaking media, the Catholic Church and established Latino organizations. This is followed by a micro level of analysis of how the AIRC emerged from established organizations and activist networks in Austin.

ACTORS IN THE 2006 MOBILIZATIONS

Spanish Speaking Media

The Spanish speaking media, the Catholic Church and established Latino organizations have received widespread attention by social scientists in the last five years for their part in the demonstrations of 2006 (Aparicio 2010; Baker-Cristales 2009; Cano 2009; Davis, Martinez, and Warner 2010; Felix et al. 2008; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Salas 2008; Heredia 2009; Reyes 2006, 2008). However, not all academic research has reached the conclusion that DJs, in particular radio personalities encouraged people to become civically engaged to challenge the status quo. One strand of the literature comments that the Spanish media contributed to the wave of the 2006 demonstrations by disseminating

information about H.R. 4437 and mobilizing support for the immigration rallies (Cano 2009; Manzano et al. 2007). In Los Angeles and Chicago, Spanish-language radio personalities like Renán Almendárez Coello "El Cucuy"/ the Bogeyman, Eduardo Sotelo "El Piolín"/ Tweetybird, Ricardo Sanchez "El Mandril"/the Baboon and "El Pistolero" were critical in appealing to people to march (Cano 2009; Felix et al. 2008; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Salas 2008; Wantanabe and Becerra 2006). These radio DJs came together despite long-standing rivalries to promote the protest and encourage participation. When organizers from the March 25 Coalition contacted "Piolin" and informed him about the consequences of H.R. 4437, Sotelo decided to call for a summit of his competitor radio DJs to support the march on March 25 (Robinson 2007; Watanabe and Becerra 2006). Immigrant rights organizers made regular appearances on the Spanish language DJ shows. Angelica Salas, executive director for CHIRLA, appeared as a regular guest in "Piolin por la Mañana," answering immigration questions from listeners, providing legislative updates, and encouraging people to attend the marches (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Salas 2008).

Also involved in the publicity of the 2006 mobilizations were Spanish-language television and print media. Spanish-language cable stations Univision, TV Azteca and Telemundo educated their audience regarding H.R. 4437 and publicized the "Gran Marcha" on March 25 (Reyes 2008). La Opinión, a local newspaper in L.A published several articles in the days leading up to the protest explaining the pending legislation and its implications for the Latina/o community (Reyes 2006).

Other scholars like Baker-Cristales (2009: 61) write that the Spanish speaking media did more than inform and encouraged listeners to march, “it shaped the vocabulary of protest, the symbolic forms of self-expression protesters would adopt and the protest tactics used.” For example, the Spanish-language media informed the type of protest and expressive form the marches should take (i.e., white clothing, American flags and slogans). The Spanish-language media privileged certain forms of political expression and criticized others (boycott, student walkouts, use of national flags from Latin America). Baker-Cristales (2009: 61) accentuates this when she says that the Spanish language media “promoted protest tactics and symbolic forms that tend to reproduce the hegemonic discourses on immigration that equate it with criminality.”

The Catholic Church

There is more consensus among academics on the role of the Catholic Church informing the clergy, parishioners and the general public of the implications of H.R. 4437 (Cano 2009; Davis, Martinez, and Warner 2010; Heredia 2009; Manzano et al 2007). On March 2006, Cardinal Mahony publicly instructed Catholic priests to engage in acts of civil disobedience if H.R.4437 were to be implemented (Heredia 2009; Manzano et al. 2007). Church facilities were used for meetings and planning for the 2006 marches. For instance, the church of Our Lady of Queen of the Angeles in L.A became “one of the city's organizing hubs against the Sensenbrenner bill H.R. 4437, playing a leading role in promoting the Roman Catholic Church's national "Justice for Immigrants" campaign

(Wantanabe and Becerra 2006).[40] On April 10, 2006, the JFI campaign united with organizations under the banner of *Today We Act, Tomorrow We Vote,* to organize a candlelight vigil and procession.

The Catholic Church vocally opposed house bill H.R. 4437 and encouraged people to participate in the April 10 march. Davis, Martinez, and Warner (2010) remark that some Catholic parishes in Chicago carried extensive work in politicizing immigrant communities and even the clergy helped arrange funding for thirty-two buses to transport parishioners to the march on April 10. However, the Catholic Church did not support the May 1st economic boycott. On April 16, Cardinal Mahony from Los Angeles discouraged its parishioners from participating in a boycott and called instead for them to pray for legalization (Cano 2009). Organizers of the boycott later said that workers should skip work only if the worker did not put his/her work at risk, and for students to join in the rallies after class. When the Catholic Church publicly stated that it would not support a boycott, this did not stop organizers from making May 1st happen. Although fewer people participated in the May 1st boycott, there were still marches scheduled for May 1st that happened independently of the Catholic Church. This is also true in places where the Catholic Church was not vocal against H.R. 4437. Cano (2009) observes that organizations independent of the Catholic Church compensated for the demobilization forces of the church. What types of organizations were these? Did established Latino organizations pull this off?

[40] The Justice for Immigrants: A Journey of Hope (JFI) campaign was formed in 2004. JFI is designed to unite and mobilize a growing network of Catholic institutions, individuals, and other faith groups in support of a legalization program and comprehensive immigration reform (see Heredia 2009).

Established Mexican American Organizations

In the immigration debate of the late 1980s, Mexican American organizations such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), National Council of La Raza (NCLR), and United Farm Workers of America (UFW) became the "Hispanic lobby" in Washington D.C (Sierra 1999:132). These Mexican American organizations placed an emphasis on building power-bases in Washington D.C., in order to influence policymakers more directly and leading Latino politics to become politics "on the hill" (Siera 1999: 138). These organizations became known as the "big four" spokespersons on immigration reform at the national level (Sierra 1991: 62).

While the "big four" are still important actors in the Immigrant Rights Movement and were involved in the 2006 marches they were more focused at lobbying politicians and trying to influence national policy (which is needed on Capitol Hill), than mobilizing grassroots support. Pallares (2010) study of Chicago's immigrant activism helps unravel some of the possible factors driving grassroots participation. She notes that like the Chicago immigrant rights marches, the immigrant rights movement does not have a single voice but rather a plethora of voices, "all seeking a common goal but with very different ideas about how to get there" (2010: 54). Grassroots organizations have fewer resources than more policy oriented or lobbying organizations but played a pivotal role in the 2006 marches, as this research demonstrates. Policy organizations like National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational

Fund (MALDEF) are well positioned to lobby in D.C because they have the hierarchical structure, the rationalized mechanisms and the political capital to interact with national political institutions (Pallares 2010: 65). However, there has developed a disconnect between grassroots organizations and Latino policy organizations. This has led to a redefinition of the relationship between the two, leading local and regional organizations to work with and independently of national organizations (Pallares 2010). For example, the Center for Community Change (CCC), kept track of the mobilizations in 2006 as well as offered seed money for some coalitions to establish themselves as a 501(c)(3) organization. Despite CCC's impressive work and projects, it did not organize at the grassroots level for the 2006 mobilizations, this work was left to IRCs like the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC).[41]

Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC)

Like so many IRCs, AIRC formed as a durable coalition of Austin organizations to rally support against the "Sensenbrenner bill" or house bill H.R. 4437. Jimena, coordinator for American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) notes that the first instance of this coalition working together actually predated H.R. 4437 as an ad-hoc

[41] It is outside the scope of this dissertation but it's worth noting that many contemporary immigrant right organizations and coalitions are divided between those who support the Center for Community Change (CCC) and the Center for American Progress (CAP) and those who oppose them. The CCC, CAP, America's Voice, and their allies on the left have been actively advocating for stricter enforcement. The explanation for progressives' shift to the right on certain immigration questions is their desire to appeal to a general public that supports enforcement. At the time of the interviews none of the IRCS in this study were affiliated with CCC or CAP but some IRCs have signed on to the national campaign to push for immigration reform, Reform Immigration For America (RIFA). Both CCC and CAP have signed on RIFA. For further reading see Budoff Brown 2010 and Arana 2007

alliance led by the American Friends Service Committee to protest against the Minute Men in 2005.

> It started as a coalition to face the Minute Men, so we called for a united front of organizations here in Austin that deals with immigration. There was a resolution, an ordinance was passed against the minute men in December of 2005 that was also organized by this office… so then we came together to organize the 2006 marches. The big marches all over the country and that's when the coalition was strengthened more with those marches. So it focused more on the marches and raids, so that's how it was born (interview, June 6, 2008)

Rosalia, an immigrant from Monterey and the coordinator for *Inmigrantes Latinos en Acción* refers to the early stages of the coalition as the *coalicioncita*, "*nomás decíamos la coalicioncita pero no tenia nombre*"/we would say the coalition but it did not have a name (interview, June 2008). When the threat of H.R. 4437 came, the AIRC was ready to mobilize.

Prior to 2005, other coalitions had formed in Austin. Rosalia remarked that a statewide coalition called the Texas Immigrant and Refugee Coalition (TIRC) formed in the 1990s to organize around the right for undocumented immigrants to have driver's license. Over 10,000 people participated in the 2001 Dallas march to support driver's license including TIRC, *Familias Unidas*, *Hondureños Unidos*, and *Salvadoreños y Guatemaltecos Unidos*, the Dallas Peace Center, Citizens and Immigrants for Equal Justice, and Mexican-American Democrats, among many others (Trejo 2001). Rosalia says that as a result of the march TIRC was formed, "*nos juntamos para formar esta coalición, la Coalición de Texas por los Derechos de los Inmigrantes*." Rosalia recounts

feeling excluded from the decisión making process, "*sentíamos que no nos tomaban en cuenta*"/we felt we were not taken into account (interview, June 2008). The driver's license campaign gave birth to the formation of TIRC but due to personality differences and other issues, the coalition fell apart. Rosalia acknowledges that even though there were tensions and problems, the coalition was able to pull off an impressive and important march in Dallas, Texas.

The spring of 2006

Although Austin had a prior history of organizing and forming alliances, Austin's reaction to the immigrant rights marches was slow. On March 30, Jim Harrington, director of the Texas Civil Rights Project gave a speech outside the West Mall building at the University of Texas at Austin during the annual festivities held in honor of César Chávez. Jim Harrington said "in L.A last week, 500,000 people marched but how many in Austin?" (Osborn 2006: A04). The high school student walkouts appeared before any marches in Austin. On Thursday, March 30, hundreds of students walked out of at least four high schools and two middle schools, and in the suburb of Round Rock, students at one of the two high schools walked out. On Friday, March 31, two to three hundred students walked out of the second Round Rock high school (Author and colleagues, forthcoming). Ana Yañez-Correa, executive director of the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition and one of the organizers of the April 10 march in Austin put it this way: "it was high school students that put us to shame because they were the first who stood up for their own beliefs" (Castillo 2006b: A01).

Although Austin was slow in responding to the marches, since 2002 community organizations have organized an annual march to pay tribute to César Chávez, the spring 2006 was no exception. On April 1st, 2006 People Organized in the Defense of Earth and her Resources (PODER) organized the César Chávez march attracting about 3,000 people (Thissen 2006: B01). One of the speakers, Representative Lloyd Doggett, compared Chávez fight for farm workers' rights to current debates about immigration and health care (Thissen 2006: B01). Although the César Chávez march was not organized against H.R. 4437, organizers and speakers intertwined the history of the farmworkers' movement with the struggle of immigrants in the face of the anti-immigrant sentiment.

Immigrant rights advocates agreed that Austin was slow to join the national wave of mobilizations. Julien Ross, an immigrant worker rights advocate in Austin said that the "rallies in Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston and other cities energized local groups to act." "It played a huge role," said Ross (Castillo 2006a: A09). "Immigrant rights groups were slow to act possibly because they were caught up in their day-to- day work activities and not linking with others to have a more systemic impact. We, too, woke up as a community of organizations," said Ross (Castillo 2006a: A09). Clarisa, a Chicana activist in MEChA and student at the University of Texas at Austin remembers reading about the marches and feeling inspired to be part of something similar in Austin. As she narrates:

> I remember checking out you know the L.A Times and the Chicago Tribune and seeing like how half a million people marched through the streets. The head line read, you know, thousands and thousands of people came out to support immigrant rights and I don't know, I just, I couldn't tell you how that made me

> feel and how empowered I felt to see people come out in defense of our community, human rights like that you know. So, *en eso estuvo de que*[it was then that] like people in Austin we are like we need to do a march *tambien* [as well] (interview, June 2008).

Rebeca, executive director of a workers rights organization, Projecto Defensaa Laboral, took the lead to call for a march on April 10 in Austin, Texas. She said:

> I really wanted us to be a part of it, so we contacted some of the national coordinators to see if there was already a planned march here in Austin that we didn't know about and there wasn't, we called We Are America, which was through the Center for Community Change, that's who was coordinating or keeping track of all the marches that were supposedly going on, and I think, we found out that there wasn't anything and then we called a meeting of different organizations that we work with, I think it was March 27 or March 30, that was the first meeting, so it was just ten days just before the march [April 10] (interview, February 2009).

Rebeca felt that it was important for Austin to have a march and convened a meeting with organizations, service providers, student groups, and faith based groups to plan and organize a march. This gave birth to the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC). Juan Antonio, a local radio host at KOOP 91.7 community radio and member of the grassroots group, CRISOL-*Pro Educación y Cultura* recounts that the meetings began to get bigger and bigger to the point of having seventy people in a meeting.

> The first two meetings that we had were at a church hall, that's where we met for the first time. The first time we met there were about 12 people, in the second meeting there were about 20, but in the fourth meeting that was held where we are now in La Fonda del Sol, there gathered about 70 people. Among them, were

> union members, members from ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union], PDL [*Projecto Defensa Laboral*], some religious associations, there were tons of people, easily 20 associations, in addition to regular people not affiliated with an organization (interview, February 2009).

The meetings were held in a range of locations such as the office of American Friends Service Committee, Fonda del Sol- a local Mexican Restaurant, Catholic parishes like Cristo Rey and San Ignacio. Pilar, owner of Fonda del Sol and member of CRISOL, remembers that in one occasion the coalition was asked to vacate one of the rooms at San Ignacio Catholic Church because another meeting was scheduled. Organizes went outside to the lawn of the parish to meet but Pilar offered her restaurant as a meeting place. As she narrates:

> I went to one meeting at a church and it seemed like the priest was afraid; I heard the priest say something like "I give you one hour and in one hour you guys either get organized or not but you have to leave the room." I perceived like the priest was nervous, they [priest] kicked us out to the grass, they [priest] were going to have a meeting, those meetings that give trainings to children, adults, and who knows who else. Once outside I told them [coalition], "I have a permanent place with parking, if you like, I can offer my place to meet. (Interview, April 2009).

In her narrative Pilar notes that the priest was nervous, possibly because it was a considerable number of people meeting and planning an event that may have seemed too political for the church. As related in Pilar's interview, individual parishes were used for meetings and planning for the 2006 marches, but the Catholic Church itself did not play a central role in the 2006 marches. The Catholic Diocese of Austin did not take vocal position opposing H.R. 4437. This is in contrast to Los Angeles where Cardinal Mohony

publicly denounced H.R. 4437. [42] Similarly, the media did not play a central role in the 2006 marches. Juan Castillo, writer for the American Statesman wrote several articles covering the 2006 marches and local Spanish newspapers like Ahora Si, El Mundo, and El Norte discussed house bill H.R. 4437 but none of the newspapers took a public stand on H.R. 4437. This was also the case for the Spanish language radio whose main popular stations at that time included Norteño 1179, Digital 92.5, and La Ley 98.9. La Ley's Spanish radio personality was Joaquin Garza "El Chulo" who was not one of the DJ's backing the marches.

The ability of the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) to bring together support from a range of organizations was evident when it pulled off two marches in the spring of 2006, one in April 10 and one in May 1st with little or no support from the Spanish language media or the Catholic Church. The AIRC attracted over 10,000 people on April 10, making it one of the largest demonstrations in Austin in 30 years (Castillo, 2006, p. A01). The April 10 march was "one of the greatest marches I think in the history of Austin" said Clarisa, a self-identified Chicana involved with the student organization MEChA at UT Austin. Following the April 10 mobilization, the AIRC immediately organized the May 1 march as part of the National Day Without Immigrants attracting between 10,000 to 12,000 people (Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition).

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42 The role of Catholic parishes with the AIRC has changed over the years. In particular Cristo Rey located in East Austin in the last three years has been a strong supporter of the AIRC by offering the coalition a place to have meetings. This change is due to the new pastor, Rev. Jayme Mathias. Also, Rev. Peter Melecio was instrumental in getting the Nicaraguan community involved with the AIRC. Father Melecio is now at Santa Barbara church and members of that church, in particular a group of Mexican immigrant women have joined the AIRC.

Even though Austin was slow in reacting to the marches, the city nonetheless witnessed thousands of people marching down Congress Ave on April 10 and May 1. But how did organizations, individuals, and allies get along with one another in order to pull off the April 10 and May 1st marches? What ensued in the aftermath of the marches? What is the AIRC's relationship with organizations in Austin? These are some of the questions that I answer in the following chapter by examining AIRC and its relationship with organizations in Austin.

CHAPTER 5: "WE CAN'T HAVE ISO TAKE OVER THIS COALITION": THE AIRC RELATIONSHIP WITH ORGANIZATIONS IN AUSTIN

What happened to the organizations that were born as coalitions to meet the threat of HR 4437? Did they survive as the threat subsided? If they survived, did IRCs change their form? In chapter five I examine the tensions among organizations that came together under the AIRC during the planning of the 2006 marches and the subsequent fissures of the coalition. Organizations like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) wanted to use AIRC for their own purposes and AIRC responded in order to protect itself. In doing so, AIRC became something different; it became an immigrant rights organization led by immigrants.

Splitting of Coalitions at the National Level

The unexpected breadth of community participation in 2006 reflects the temporal and ad-hoc coalitions that formed. There was a plethora of coalitions that formed in 2006 that were called something like the "[Fill in the name of your city] Coalition for Immigrant Rights" (Fox 2010: 14). Names ranged from the San Jose Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Kern Coalition For Immigrant Rights (KCFIR), Coalition for Immigrants Rights of Sonoma County to the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition, to name a few.

To understand immigrant right coalition formation, one needs to explore both how different kinds of organizations and immigrants work together, as well as how they collaborate with non-immigrant allies. While some coalitions are long-standing, others

are more ephemeral—as in the case of many of the coalitions that came together in 2006. The threat posed by H.R 4437 brought together groups in 2006 that had not worked together closely before. The role of threat in bringing potential allies together is a double edged sword as a sense of urgency encourages groups to overcome differences and work toward shared goals but at the same time, however, when the shared threat is lifted, fault lines and limitations are exposed both between organizations and individuals (Fox 2010)

Moreover, groups with different constituencies and strategies may also have very different ideas about how to pursue shared goals. These differences were apparent when the debate shifted from H.R. 4437 that was universally seen as a threat to the question of how best to support comprehensive immigration reform and what issues to organize around. In some cases, different perceptions and views led to the splitting of coalitions and the emergence of parallel coalitions. In Los Angeles, for example, one coalition called for comprehensive immigration reform, while another supported full amnesty (Engeman 2009). In Austin, Texas what ensued was a splitting of the AIRC because of different agendas, opinions about what the AIRC membership should look like and who should be involved. Clarisa comments that this was happening at the national level

> For the first marches in 2006 *hubo* [there was] solidarity, like I never, never seen in my life. *Despues de May es cuando empesaron a suceder esas divisions porque yo creo que sucedio a nivel nacional* [After May is when the divisions started happening because I think that it was happening at the national level] we heard of coalitions being dismantled because of those same politics because for the 2006 marches people put those politics aside and said look, we gonna unite against the Sensenbrenner bill even if it's for the short term. I think in Austin *lo que queriamos saber si ibamos a poder seguir Fuertes esa coalición de personas*

> [what we wanted to know is if we were going to be a strong coalition]. We wanted to make sure that this movement for immigrant rights didn't end after the marchas, [marches] that we went beyond that initial mobilization and continue to work together to build a stronger community and a stronger movement (Interview, June 2008)

Clarisa's narrative accentuates the importance of leaving the politics aside to respond to the urgency of the political threat of H.R. 4437. After the mobilizations, it was clear for Clarisa and others that it was important to continue with the coalition in order to create a strong and sustainable immigrant rights movement in Austin, Texas. Before this, however, several events unfolded that led AIRC to split.

During and after the 2006 marches, tensions and disagreements began to brew among organizations involved with the AIRC. Some of these tensions were manifested during the planning of the April and May 2006 marches, having to do with leadership style. These tensions escalated following the marches, mainly on how AIRC should proceed, what to focus on, what organizations should be involved in the coalition, and who should be part of the meetings. Some of these tensions and disagreements led to a split in the coalition in the summer and continued well into the fall of 2006. Some attribute this split to "interpersonal relationships," and largely because of the active presence of the International Socialist Organization (ISO).[43]

[43]The International Socialist Organization (ISO) participates in the struggles to "stop war and occupation, fights against racism and anti-immigrant scapegoating, the struggle for women's rights like the right to choose abortion, opposing anti-gay bigotry, and standing up for workers' rights." The ISO stands in the tradition of revolutionary socialists Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky in the belief that workers themselves are the force that can lead the fight to win a socialist society. http://www.internationalsocialist.org/what_we_stand_for.html. Retrieved on May 26, 2011.

In what follows, I bring in the narratives of Silky, Peter, Clarisa, Barbara and Carlos, who were involved in the planning of the marches and directly and indirectly with the AIRC split, to address how these tensions emerged and unfolded. What ensued shaped the direction of the AIRC to the present moment.

Tensions in the Planning of the 2006 Marches

A prominent Spanish saying is that "*No todo es color de rosa*"[Not everything is rosy]. There is more to the stunning scenery of people marching in the streets of Austin in 2006. Tensions began brewing during the planning of the marches and following the marches, leading to a split in the AIRC. Silky Shaw, a South East Asian American in her late twenties was born and raised in Houston, Texas. She has been involved in social justice struggles since her high school years in Houston. While working toward her undergraduate degree at UT Austin, Silky got involved in diverse campus issues ranging from anti-racism, animal rights, mobilizing students for the Ralf Nader campaign, playing an instrumental role in establishing Asian-American studies at UT, to protesting the war in Iraq. The events of September 11 politicized Silky and led her to get involved with Not With Our Money and shortly thereafter with Grassroots Leadership. Currently, Silky works for Detention Watch Network in New York as an Outreach and Organizing Coordinator. Detention Watch Network (DWN) is a coalition that was founded in 1997 by the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., the Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service in response to the rapid

growth of the immigration detention system in the United States stemming from the immigration laws passed by Congress in 1996.[44]

Silky's extensive organizing experience became an asset when Austin, Texas organized the April and May 1st march in 2006. In speaking about the pre-May 1st march and its aftermath, Silky said

> What happened in pre-May 1st was fine because we were moving, every meeting we had was like okay this needs to get done, this needs to get done, this is how we're gonna move, this is how we get the word out to people, this is what we have to do, …and all of the sudden May 1st happened and was a big success, but we end up having our next meeting, and ISO brings I don't know how many members, they brought a whole bunch of people. And they start taking over the space. And if we vote on anything it's like oh they're going to be there to vote in the way they see things going. I can't...I just don't have the best memory in terms of what the issues were specifically, but it just seemed like the space it was "what's up with these ISO people being there all the time". So I think that's when we decided let's just take a month-long break and then have our next meeting and just not tell them. And this was a decision that was really tough because it was like "oh we're starting our own thing now?" I mean, it's hard; it's hard to make group decisions and find the ones that make the most sense (interview, April 2010).

Since H.R. 4437 was a political threat, it was urgent for diverse sectors to come together and pull off a march and leave the politics and conflicts aside. However, once the marches were over, tensions began escalating with some organizations trying to set and take over the agenda and direction of the coalition. Engeman (2009) notes that in

[44] http://www.detentionwatchnetwork.org/. Retrieved on May 26, 2011.

some cases, different perceptions and views lead to the splitting of coalitions and the emergence of parallel coalitions. In Los Angeles, for example, one coalition called for comprehensive immigration reform, while another supported full amnesty (Engeman 2009). In Austin, Texas what ensued was a splitting of the AIRC partly because of different agendas, views about what the AIRC should look like and who should be involved.

From Silky's narrative, we learn that ISO members begin "taking over space" in the post May 1st march meetings both by the overrepresentation of ISO members and speaking at the meetings. As a result, Silky and other organizers felt that it was important to take a short break and not invite ISO back to the meetings as a way to gain back the ownership of their space.

Peter, a twenty-eight year old white male has been involved in social justice struggles since his early teens. This is not surprising since he comes from a family where politics is discussed in the home. When he arrived at UT Austin in 1999 he got involved in several campus events and in 2000 he organized around the Ralph Nader campaign and from there went to Mexico City for the Zapatista tour. He came back to UT Austin and became involved around issues of the prison industrial complex. He and others camped out "in the south mall for a week and it led to a sit-in in the tower, kinda like this very politicized moment and it was kinda my introduction to the issues around prison industrial complex, from there I done prison related activism ever since" said Peter. Peter was also a founding member of Monkeywrench Books in 2002—a cooperative bookstore featuring activist literature.

Both Silky and Peter knew each other from their university activism at the UT campus and organizing around the Ralph Nader campaign. Also, both worked for Grassroots Leadership during the time they were involved with the 2006 mobilizations. Like Silky, Peter recounts that during and after the marches there was conflict "mostly between the organizations that worked on immigration issues and this sort of unaligned activists who were in some ways more radical people who were not involved in immigration, members like socialist organizations."

Peter remembers that AIRC meetings were being increasingly dominated by "people who had no connection with the immigrant community at all, that weren't working with organizations within the immigration work." Peter makes a striking point that organizations who had no direct connection or relationship with the immigrant community were attempting to dominate the AIRC and "were just in some ways trying to capitalize on the movement, it was a hot thing you know, it was the summer of 2006, we just had these big marches" said Peter. The mobilizations of 2006 were timely for organizations who wanted to grow and expand their membership and to push an agenda, like ISO. When I asked Peter what he meant by capitalize, he said:

> Like you know…. anybody could come to like be able to you know vote equally regardless if they were an immigrant, regardless if they belonged to an immigration organization and so sort of pushing it in a way…In a way that I think it was alienating some of the more immigrant organizations and immigrants in the coalition. They were trying to push an outside agenda sort of (interview, May 2009).

Peter's narrative highlights the tensions that result from organizations that are involved with the immigrant community and organizations with little to no ties. Immigrant serving organizations realized that ISO posed a threat to the future of the coalition and felt that it was important for the coalition to carve a space for itself, this led to a split in the coalition. The split "was basically made for us, not them" says Silky, noting that it was a conscious and strategic effort by her and other allies to push ISO aside because leaders of immigrant serving organizations and allies wanted AIRC to continue and having ISO part of it was not going to move the coalition forward, at least not during that time.

There was a conscious decision to exclude ISO from meetings because leaders from the immigrant community and organizations that work with immigrants felt that ISO was going to take over AIRC. Silky recounts an incident where she had to physically close the door to one of ISO members.

> I don't remember where it was anymore but we had another meeting at a church and Joe showed up who was part of ISO uninvited and there was this whole tension thing, and this big question of "why can't I be here?" and "I dunno...you can't be here because you weren't invited to be here because it's a closed meeting" and it was really frustrating.
> **Hortencia**: Who was at the meeting?
> **Silky**: It was Austin Leadership, PDL, Catholic Charities, another reverend whose name I don't remember...
> **Hortencia:** So there was a distinction between ISO and the organizations that work with the community?
> **Silky:** Pretty much all the other organizations besides TCJC [Texas Criminal

Justice Coalition] and ISO were a part of that.

Hortencia: Why? Was this a strategic move?

Silky: (Laughs). Yeah for the most part it was strategic, we just felt like the coalition needed to be led by immigrants, needed to have immigrants at the forefront. So yeah, I think it was strategic in that sense. What happened was that we were trying to figure out the structure, I think it was based solely on structure, and how meetings went and how the whole coalition was gonna be structured. And Joe from ISO threw out this proposal and we were gonna vote on it, and they basically had a meeting where they brought a whole bunch of ISO people to vote on the structure that they put out there. And it was ridiculous, it was like "o.k. none of us are okay with this necessarily, this isn't organic, we need to figure out what makes the most sense for this". We really felt the consensus building and the collective coalition was really important, and I think they were trying to get away from that. So I think that's how it started. Afterwards we said "let's just not plan the next meeting and they can do their own." Which we knew they weren't gonna do, I mean they couldn't get the right people because me and Rebeca had developed those relationships and we all kinda knew each other. So that's how that next meeting happened, and we kinda ended the Google group (interview, April 2010).

Silky felt that ISO members were over-represented in the group and would have a disproportionate voice at the table. For this reason, Silky felt that ISO should not be included in this process. It was a strategic move to move away from ISO and this meant to discontinue the google e-mail list-serve that was formed to organize around the marches so that people could communicate information and organize for the marches. Silky was able to locate the e-mail that was sent to the list serve but does not recall who sent it out. The dissolution of the google e-mail list-serve occurred on June 5, 2006 and

said the following

> Tuesday's June 6th meeting is cancelled. And we will no longer be having meetings. The immigrants' coalition has been greatly successful in moving forward to achieve its goals in facilitating two of Austin's greatest and biggest marches. Thanks to everyone who assisted in making this possible. Many organizations and churches that directly service, organize, or advocate for immigrants as their main constituents are moving forward, as are many other coalitions across the country, in supporting this movement in new and creative ways during these rapid changes in the immigration debate. Following the recommendations of immigrant organizing partners nationwide we are excited to be entering a new phase of organizing by focusing on working more directly with the constituents of immigrants' rights organizations. We have made great strides forward and will continue to do so!

By cutting off the communication with ISO, organizations serving the immigrant community, pro-immigrant rights organizations and organizations that worked with the immigrant community were able to have their own meetings. The act was “explicitly strategic because we were like this is not what we want, this is not what our members want. We need to make a choice here, and it was a really hard one, but it's the choice we ended up making” said Silky. She recognizes that this was a tough decision and perhaps led other organizations to think this was wrong, like MEChA.

Student groups like Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA) were involved but were not very clear on the reasons for the split and why ISO was being excluded from the meetings. MECha is a student organization that was formed in 1969 as a result of the Chicano Movement of the 1960s. MEChA was founded on the principles

of self-determination for the liberation of indigenous people. MEChA believes that political involvement and education are the avenue for change in society.[45] The MEChA chapter at UT Austin has always been involved in social justice issues as they pertain to indigenous populations and people of Mexican descent. Some MEChA members were confused about the tensions going on and felt that the split was "fucked up." Barbara, is a self-identified Chicana undergraduate in her early twenties and is the youngest of six children to Mexican immigrant parents. In high school she joined Amnesty International and continued to work with the organization when she arrived to UT in 2005 as well as MEChA. Throughout the planning of the 2006 marches, MECha had student representatives at the meetings, Barbara was one of them. This is what Barbara had to say about the split:

> There was this tension of who they wanted to include and who not, and so I thought it was fucked up for whoever it was that made that decision to exclude or include because that coalition when it happened, it happened organically and even though it was tough to balance people who were socialist, people who were anarchist, people who are part of the green party, churches, like individuals, a whole bunch of people, it was hard! I know it was hard, I'll come out of those meetings being like what the fuck, why can't people just agree but it was hard because people had to make compromises and compromises take time and when you are talking about people's livelihoods, like this is real. I see why they would have said o.k we only want certain organizations but at the same time I think it was kinda negative in the sense that they kinda split that up (interview, July 2009).

[45] http://www.nationalmecha.org/about.html. Retrieved on May 26, 2011

Barbara puts an emphasis that AIRC was an organic process, the "coalition when it happened, it happened organically" so it was very hard for her to see the split and groups being excluded. She also recognizes that coming to consensus is very hard when diverse people are at the table and when the issues at hand involved people who are directly affected. Silky acknowledges that closing the space and not allowing ISO in the meeting was "totally messed up, it was like a coup, a mini coup that basically happened, where we were like we can't have ISO take over this coalition, we need to stop."

Groups like CRISOL and MEChA remember being part of both meetings at one point and not knowing which meeting to go to. Since members of CRISOL and MEChA were Chicana/os and Mexican immigrants, they felt tokenized when they would go to ISO meetings. Barbara and Clarisa recount their experience this way:

> **Clarisa:** as a women of color when I was in those spaces it just felt awkward because even though from the heart they [ISO] were like really sincerely trying to be part of the *movimiento/*movement, like it didn't feel right and I almost felt like I was being tokenized for being there. Like they wanted me to be like the spokesperson …There are some things that white people don't get, like not everyone can get arrested or you know not everyone has the privilege to be marching all the time. I can't say who was right or who was wrong and deciding that some people should be excluded from the coalition and not. I can definitely say that sometimes being part of those predominantly white anti-racist organizing is not a welcoming and comfortable space for people of color like me (interview June 2008)

> **Barbara:** I was very much tokenized in that organization [ISO] and that was really hard for me to figure out and articulate to them and be honest…all of a

> sudden I'm the point person for the AIRC, I'm the pinpoint person for this. It was a very much an awkward situation because like I cared about immigrant rights but I was trying to do that through MEChA and through my anti-war stuff. That was very difficult point in trying to figure out," hey *no se aprovechen de mi tiempo*," *pero tambien/*[don't take advantage of my time, but at the same time] them [ISO] thinking they had some sort of legitimacy through me, like it wasn't never said that way, but that's how I felt (interview, July 2009)

Both Clarisa and Barbara touch on an important and often times missed discourse, how organizers of color are tokenized both from white-organizations and even organizations with diverse populations. Being Chicana meant that Clarisa and Barbara were the voice for the Mexican, Mexican American community and were often times asked to do certain tasks that ISO members could not do because of their social location, for example, contacting the Spanish-speaking media about an event, being the "representative" and spokesperson on certain issues. Although Clarisa does not articulate a critique of (white) privilege, Barbara comments that ISO members were predominately white males who did not recognize their privilege and were not self-critical of their role in immigrant rights organizing.

> How you organize is very different within the context of building coalition for immigrant rights when that's a sensitive context and one has to recognize their privilege. When they're walking through that door and that lack of seeing their privilege was like, like the fact that I started to get embarrassed because I was an ISO member, I knew that something was wrong (interview, July 2009).

Carlo is an immigrant from México City who immigrated to the U.S. in 1981 for economic reasons. He arrived to Austin and since then has been living here; he is now a naturalized U.S. citizen. His political consciousness has been shaped by his involvement in the student movements of the 1960s in Mexico City and immigrant rights movement of the 1990s in the U.S. Carlos is a founding member of CRISOL, a cultural grassroots organization that seeks to promote education and culture of people of Mexican descent.

Carlos comments that certain individuals *se agenciaron* /took ownership of the AIRC when the split occurred. Carlos is referring to Workers Defense Project/ Projecto Defensa Laboral (PDL). Once the split occurred, PDL became the leading organization under the leadership of Rebeca to move the AIRC forward.

> The directors of Workers Defense Project took ownership of the leadership of the coalition because they did not ask anyone's opinion; meetings will be at Cristo Rey and no longer in Fonda del Sol. Why? They did not take anyone into account. This was when the coalition began to fade away and we tried to lift the coalition, we had a meeting and invited organizations and they always had excuses, PDL, Catholic Charities, ILA, AFSC. Two or three organizations attended, we would tell them, let's make an effort to continue with the coalition (interview February 2009).

Not only was ISO excluded from the AIRC but so were grassroots groups like CRISOL who were not aware of the politics and decision that led Silky, Rebeca and others to exclude ISO. In this process, CRISOL was excluded from the decision making and agenda setting for the AIRC. Carlos remembers trying to keep the coalition going by

reaching out to PDL, Catholic Charities and other organizations serving the immigrant community but he felt that there was no response. This reflects a fissure between grassroots groups who were smaller, not as established with little financial power and visibility in Austin and "established" organizations who have been *made* legitimate actors in the immigrant rights movement by the media, politicians, and supporters. The legitimate actors included PDL, Catholic Charities, American Friends Service Committee and to some extent *Inmigrantes Latinos en Acción.* The leaders of these organizations—Rebeca and Silky from PDL, Amy from Catholic Charities, Jimena from AFSC, and Rosalia from ILA became the "voice" and legitimate actors in the immigrant rights movement. Thus, organizations like ISO, CRISOL, MEChA, People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources (PODER), University Leadership Initiative (ULI) among others felt excluded from AIRC.

The exclusion and division was painful and upsetting. Rebeca, Silky, Amy, Kimberly, Jimena, among other leaders were committed in continuing with the AIRC but there were unresolved issues about who was going to lead the coalition. A retreat seemed like the most appropriate step to take.

AIRC Retreat: "Reconstitute" the Coalition

A critical juncture for the AIRC was the retreat of 2007. From the onset of the 2006 mobilizations and its aftermath, Rebeca was according to many of the participants I spoke to the main person who took on the responsibility of moving the coalition forward. This responsability was coupled with Rebecca's own program work as the executive

director for *Projecto Defensa Laboral* (PDL). Rebecca as well as other organizational leaders recognized that her work pace and level of responsibility was not sustainable. Kimberly, a longtime activist and ally in the immigrant community remembers Rebeca saying "I can't keep doing this, I have my own job to do, I can't run the coalition also, somebody's gotta do it." In order for the coalition to move forward, a part time or full time staff was needed to build its infrastructure and build a membership base that was missing. At the same time this was happening, coalitions throughout the U.S. were vanishing as Peter narrates:

> After 2006 everything was dying, and in other places the coalitions were just evaporating. So you have this simultaneous thing of like people who are not working with the immigrant community at all, we [Grassroots Leadership] work with the immigrant community not at the level that PDL does and although increasingly we are through Clarisa's work but back then we were working on issues that dealt with immigration but not directly with the immigrant community but within the immigration project. So at the same time the momentum was dying and been sort of increasingly pushed by people who did not have any ties to the immigrant community, so, we reconstitute it and that was a LONG effort (interview, May 2009).

Peter comments that as the momentum of the marches was declining, it was important for the coalition to reorganize itself with organizations that work with either immigrants or on immigration issues, because organizations who did not work directly with the immigrant community were trying to push the coalition in other directions. The retreat was a decisive moment in this effort to "reconstitute" the coalition so that

according to Peter, it wouldn't be "pushed around, sort of the leftist issue of the day and then fade away."

Kimberly is a fifty two year old white woman and executive director of a non-profit organization that provides food, shelter and other services to refugees and immigrants in Austin. Kimberly remembers being at the retreat in 2007 and seeing a vision for the coalition and understanding the broader context and significance of having a permanent coalition in Austin, Texas. National leadership such as the Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) played an important role in the retreat. FIRM provides expertise and resources for the development of the internal structure of organizations (Shaffer 2000).[46]

> **Kimberly:** They [FIRM] were like, "look, this is what's happening in Washington, this is what it looks like in other places, if you guys set up a coalition here it can be a part of this, and there's funding you can get for that." So they kind of gave us a vision. Which was important because just on the local level you don't know what does it look like in other places.
> **Hortencia:** feeling that you are not alone, other people are doing this?
> **Kimberly:** Yeah, and that other people have been successful doing it, they've set up thriving coalitions. And that gave us a vision (interview, August 2009).

A staff member from FIRM facilitated the AIRC retreat in the fall 2007. It is not clear if AIRC provided the facilitator with a financial stipend or if the expenses were covered by FIRM. Nonetheless, there was wide agreement that the retreat was a major

[46] FIRM is a project of the Center for Community Change (CCC). CCC is a thirty two year old 501(c)(3) organization that "connects and mobilizes grassroots groups to enhance their leadership, voice and power" http://www.communitychange.org/who-we-are. Retrieved on November 5, 2010

turning point for the coalition. Nancy is a white female in her late twenties and graduate student in social policy and volunteer of the coalition remembers that everyone who was at the retreat were very committed. The "usual suspects," as she calls them were there: PDL, Catholic Charities, Casa Marianella, and AFSC were there. Nancy recounts the significance of the retreat this way:

> They [FIRM] did a really outstanding job; they talked to us about their work in promoting immigration reform, what other coalitions were doing. They talked about the Tennessee Immigrant Rights Coalition and I think they talked about other organizations in California, L.A. I think the point that we all took that day was, there are other coalitions out there, there is work to do, we are all really committed to this but I think we are going to need to hire a coordinator, like if we are serious about being an immigrant rights coalition in Austin (interview, April 2009).

Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) played a crucial role during this precarious time for the coalition by providing local organizations with a vision of the broader context of the immigrant rights movement and local organizing and the role of AIRC in it. This also meant that a full time person was needed; the next reasonable step was to hire a coordinator.

The AIRC Coordinator

A steering committee body was formed following the retreat sometime in late 2007. This body was in charge of coming up with a job description and hiring a coordinator for the AIRC. On March 2008 Caroline Keating-Guerra was hired. Caroline

was born in Omaha, Nebraska in 1982 to a Mexican American mother and an Irish-American father. She grew up in a very homogenous community and it was not until she went to college and studied Latin American Studies and Journalism that she became more in touch with her Mexican American heritage. A pivotal point in her political consciousness was studying abroad in Mexico and visiting and learning about the Zapatista movement in 2006. "It was definitely the point in time where I see my social consciousness awaking...my formative experience" said Caroline. After graduating with a master's degree in Latin American Studies from UT Austin, Caroline moved to New York where she volunteered with several community organizations and where she worked for a restaurant union. By the time she was hired to be the coordinator for AIRC, she had organizing experience but felt unease about being the coordinator for an immigrant rights coalition because she was not an immigrant herself. As she said,

> to be honest I'm not completely okay, I think it would be better, more appropriate, for this position to be held by an immigrant who can speak from experience. I can't speak from experience, but I hope that by building up leadership amongst the membership that those leaders can then come forwards and represent the organization rather than just me representing the organization. And at one point we would be able to hand it over to an immigrant to lead the organization

Caroline took the position with the goal of building the infrastructure and membership of AIRC so that it would be led by and for immigrants. Caroline was hired

two months before the annual May 1st International Workers Day march in 2008. She recounts her experience this ways:

> **Caroline:** I came to Austin and it was like "here you go, here is what you have to work with." So I had to work with really not a lot – twenty thousand dollars was the startup funds, no office. Rebeca…she was the coordinator, [she] passed over some notes to me.
>
> **Hortencia:** No orientation?
>
> **Caroline**: No, nothing, not really any orientation. And here was this group of people who hired me that are kind of supposed to form the steering committee, here you go. And also there's a march in two months that you have to plan. So I was just thrown into it, and there wasn't a lot of structure in the organization, it didn't exist (interview, May 2010).

Caroline remembers having a pile of folders handed-off to her, this was her orientation. Caroline embarked on a journey to create an internal structure for AIRC. This was challenging given the $20,000 start-up funds would only cover six months of salary. From the onset Caroline had to focus on fundraising because of the financial instability of the coalition. Another challenging aspect of Caroline's work has been outreach and getting organizations to sign on as members.

> Getting people to sign on as members has been really difficult. I think just getting enough funding and resources, building capacity and organization. To hire other staff people to take on some of the responsibilities. You know another organization...the work that I do is probably enough for a staff of five. Usually they have enough staff people to support the different committees, different projects; they may have a staff person just to do fundraising. So I think that's been a major challenge, funding (interview, May 2010).

Caroline reminds us that non-profit work is demanding and often involves more than one job description and more than forty-hours a week. Nonetheless, steering committee members as well as organizations in Austin recognize that Caroline did a great job in the midst of the past tensions and conflict that she had to inherit.

AIRC Inter-Organizational Relationships: The ISNA Case

Since Caroline became the coordinator for the AIRC, there was minimal discussion of AIRC's prior tension with ISO. When Caroline was hired one of her goals was to establish quarterly general assembly meetings where immigrant serving organizations and organizations that work with immigrants, refugees, and other marginalized populations could come and learn about AIRC work, projects, and become involved. During this process of contacting organizations to attend AIRC assembly meetings and sign on as membership organizations, Caroline learned about some of the past tensions. This did not seem to bother Caroline since it was a new start for her to build relationships with organizations and ISO was no longer active in the coalition.

What was challenging for Caroline was the relationship between AIRC and the Immigrant Services Network of Austin (ISNA). ISNA was formed in 2003 as a network of immigration advocates and service providers to share information and updates on important immigration matters in Austin. Some of the member organizations include Austin Community College, AIRC, Austin Police Department, Austin Public Library, English at Work, Travis County Sheriff's Office, *Projecto Defensa Laboral* (PDL), to

name a few. [47] Difficulties between ISNA and the AIRC emerged with regard to ISNA's stance toward local law enforcement collaboration with Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Austin. AIRC felt that ISNA was taking a neutral role and not advocating for the protection and rights of immigrants. This is not surprising since one of ISNA's values is to remain "as a neutral, non-political arena where stakeholders can convene in order to work towards local solutions." This apparent "neutrality" according to Daniela is actually taking a stand on ICE in Travis County.

Daniela, a Venezuelan immigrant in her late twenty's immigrated to the U.S. in 2000 with a student visa to study at UT Austin. Daniela is not involved with AIRC directly but does so through her volunteer work with American Friends Service Committee. She is currently working with her husband to build a Hometown Association of Salvadorian immigrants. Daniela like many other immigrants in Austin is troubled with local law enforcement collaboration with ICE. In particular, she is critical about service providers' stance on this issue. She describes the Immigrant Services Network of Austin (ISNA) as taking a passive stance, a subtle stance toward the Sherriff's collaboration with ICE. Daniela recounts an incident when she went with ISNA to the Travis County jail on a tour and asked a series of questions about the detention of immigrants. She was frowned upon.

> They do not get involved but they do research but they leave the research sitting there and they do nothing. It is not research for action, it is very passive and in their passivity they are taking a stand. If they are passive that says something, that

[47] http://isnaustin.org/about/ Retrieved on May 26, 2011

> does not sit well with me and I did not want to be part of anything with ISNA (interview, February 2009).

Daniela did not want to be part of ISNA because according to her they do not understand the issues and needs of the immigrant community and their research as she says is "not research for action." Esmeralda, a Mexican American in her early twenties was an intern for AIRC from 2008-2009. Violet was the lead coordinator in the AIRC Raids Preparedness Committee where she was responsible for coordinating with ISNA a raid preparedness package.[48] She remembers going to these meetings and feeling frustrated because ISNA was taking "too long" and feeling that they did not have a sense of urgency to get the raids preparedness package complete and ready for dissemination.

> We were trying to get these appointments set up with the churches and give presentations but we couldn't, we couldn't move as fast as they were moving which was pretty slow…the way I felt it was like they would just go to the meetings and pass it around [raids preparedness tool kit draft]. It wasn't like they knew what was going on because I didn't see the urgency; we had the urgency [AIRC] (interview, February 2009).

Nancy, a white woman in her mid-twenties who served in the AIRC steering committee from 2007-2009 makes this distinction between AIRC and ISNA:

> I think there was a lot of overlap between the AIRC and ISNA. ISNA, a lot of them receive state or federal funding or city funding, they don't take aggressive stances and they don't really advocate policies that are going to make life easier

[48] Numerous ICE operations took place nationwide between 2006 and 2007 resulting in separation of families (Navarro 2009). The AIRC felt that it was important to focus on raids preparedness given the social and political environment.

> for immigrants. I think it's hard. There is this ISNA and AIRC slide because they are also well suited to be advocates because they are familiar with the experience but I think they kinda see AIRC as just this, you know, maybe too far to the left organization (interview, April 2009).

Nancy suggests that part of the possible detachment between ISNA and AIRC is that the coalition is seen as too political, too "leftist," while ISNA members are employees of the county, and hence, cannot take a vocal and visible stand on certain issues or speak adversely about their policies and employment. This makes AIRC relationship with ISNA a bit rocky. Nicole, a white woman in her mid-thirties is a policy analyst for Travis County and sits on the board of ISNA; she recognizes that the work of ISNA and AIRC benefit each other and both should be able to understand each other's position.

> From my perspective it's not at all a zero-sum game – it seems like if anything ISNA's doing better with benefit from AIRC and vice-versa. So I'm hoping that it doesn't come to people having to limit their participation so much that they choose one or the other, that they can see the benefits of both. I think if you're an immigration advocate you have to wear more than one hat. Because it is so emotional, no one will take you seriously unless they can see you in more than one capacity (laughs) (interview, August 2009).

Nicole argues that the work of AIRC and ISNA should be seen as distinct but as complementing each other. AIRC benefits from ISNA as it provides a forum to share information and resources. AIRC can also reach ISNA's membership base when it needs their support for nonpolitical issues but AIRC does not have ISNA endorsement to

oppose local law enforcement collaboration with ICE. Individual ISNA members can sign on to an AIRC petition but not as an organization. As frustrating as it was, Caroline was able to work with ISNA on several fronts. For example, it collaborated with ISNA to develop the raid preparedness package, used ISNA meetings to inform their members of upcoming AIRC events like the International Workers' Day in 2008, Just Immigration Speaker Series in 2009, the Immigration Convention in 2010, and other AIRC events.

Projecto Defensa Laboral/Workers Defense Project

To examine the AIRC history, one must speak about the role that PDL has played and how this has shaped the coalition. Rebeca, executive director of PDL took on the leadership to move the AIRC forward in the aftermath of the 2006. Given that PDL was a founding member of AIRC in 2006, it had a strong presence between 2006 and the spring of 2008. This caused some tension between AIRC members and PDL staff and membership.

From the onset, Rebeca's leadership style was questioned by many members of the immigrant community, many felt that she did not take into account other people's view. For example, Carlos from CRISOL felt excluded from the meetings and decision-making process.

> Mainly it was Rebeca who was making all of the decisions which we thought was a little absurd. She was the first who did not want to have the meetings at a given location [Fonda del Sol]. Little things like that were discouraging for me, it was not democratic, we are not taken into account. Why should we go if they are not going to ask for our opinion (interview, February 2009).

Carlos is recounting his experience when the AIRC resumed after the ISO incident and began having regular meetings in the spring of 2007. He felt that the decisions that were made did not make sense and were not democratic. This discouraged Carlos from attending AIRC meetings because he felt that his opinion and thoughts were not taking into account. Similarly, Rosalia, an immigrant from Monterey Mexico who has been involved in the immigrant community since she arrived in the 1990s felt that PDL was taking all the credit from the organizing that took place both in 2006 and 2007.

> A man who works there [PDL] said that he knew all the hard work that was done and it was thanks to Projecto Defensa Laboral because their coordinator [Rebeca] said that if it wasn't for her nothing would have been done (interview, June 2008).

Rosalia became increasingly bothered when the coalition meetings switched from Spanish to English sometime in the spring of 2007. This was coupled with a lack of dialogue by PDL with other organizations in delegating responsibilities for the 2006 and 2007 marches.

> I felt that they were doing the work without taking us into account, oh well, I said, it's something that she wants to do. Then, I didn't see it bad but when we would go to the meetings, the majority spoke English and before we started them [meetings] in Spanish. There came a time when I thought, "I'm going to send someone [to the meetings], a bilingual volunteer because I don't understand completely what they are saying, I don't understand some of the words they use. Rebeca would tell me, Rosalia I put you in this committee [education committee]. She did not even ask me if I wanted to be in the committee. I felt that she wanted to be in charge of the situation and I felt a little uncomfortable (Interview, June 2008).

For many, this language shift in meetings from Spanish to English reflected a broader shift in the AIRC situation and the organizations involved. Since the split from ISO, Rebeca, Silky and other individuals were concerned in creating a coalition that reflected organizations involved in the immigrant community. Thus, many of the organizations involved in 2007 were service providers and advocacy organizations whose staff spoke English. This included Casa Marianella, Catholic Charities, and *Projecto Defensa Laboral*. In addition, some of the immigrant participants noted that there was a disconnect between AIRC and the immigrant community, in particular, organizations like CRISOL and *Inmigrantes Latinos en Acción* felt excluded because of the language barrier and because they were not being taken into account.

Nonetheless, Rebeca did a good job in keeping the AIRC alive the first couple of years. Kimberly, a white woman in her early fifties who has been involved in social justice issues since her teens, says this about Rebeca:

> Rebeca did a really good job those first couple of years because we needed someone to stand up and be a leader, and it's often hard to find leaders, and she was willing to do it. But it wasn't sustainable, and that's the problem when you're too dependent on a specific leader. And one of the things I feel really happy about now is that if Caroline left, someone could replace her.

Since Caroline got hired, she has made an effort to reach out to immigrants and grassroots organizations. Caroline made great strides to have the meetings in Spanish with English translation. Alberto, an immigrant in his early forties immigrated from Mexico in the late 1980s. He is an active parishioner at Cristo Rey and has been involved

in the coalition since 2006. Alberto said that "*la mayoría [de las juntas] al principio fueron en ingles después en español pero ya después fue como más bilingüe y ahora son más en español*"/ at the beginning the majority [of the meetings] were in English and then in Spanish but later it became more bilingual and now they are in Spanish (interview, April 2009).

Reaching out to organizations that serve the immigrant community and grassroots groups as well as gradually having the meetings in Spanish can be credited to Caroline's work. In addition, Caroline made an effort to put some distance between AIRC and PDL in order to create a separate identity for the coalition. Before this effort, many people in the immigrant community believed that AIRC was a part of PDL. As Rosalia comments "*mucha gente tiene confusión en que si la coalición es de PDL*"/ a lot of people are confused if the coalition is part of PDL.

AIRC Committees

In an effort to create its own identity and infrastructure, AIRC under the leadership of Caroline created several projects or committees as she called them: The Policy Advocacy Committee, ICE out the Jail Committee, Raids Preparedness Committee, and the Welcoming Initiative. The Policy Advocacy Committee was formed around the Texas Legislative Session (January-June 2009). This committee has organized advocacy trainings and state-wide advocacy day in 2009. Over 75 individuals from groups in El Paso, Midland-Odessa, Houston, San Antonio and Austin met with key legislators across the state to advocate for a reversal of the new driver's license rule for

non-citizens, an end to local enforcement of federal immigration law, an end to employer sanctions, and the continuation of in-state tuition for undocumented students in Texas. At the end of the legislative session, the AIRC General Assembly voted to become part of the Reform Immigration for America campaign to advocate for immigration reform and sent two members to the Reform Immigration for America Summit in D.C. June 3-5 2009. Because of the lack of participation of groups from Texas in the summit, AIRC joined with other Texas immigrant rights organizations to form the Reform Immigration for Texas Alliance (RITA). RITA sought to create a stronger, united voice in Texas for immigration reform. In February 2010, the AIRC in conjunction with RITA hosted a state-wide conference for immigration reform that was attended by a broad sector of supporters from across the state.

ICE Out of the Jail Committee has worked for the past three years to limit Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) access to the local county jail. The ICE Out of the Jail Committee has led broad-based organizing campaigns against this collaboration. The activities have ranged from holding press conferences in front of the jail, conducting meetings with city council, county commissioners, state representatives, the police chief and the police union, organizing a mass demonstration that marched past the jail, delivering petitions with over 1,000 signatures of Austin community members and non-profit organizations opposing Travis County Sheriff's collaboration with ICE, to meeting with the Sheriff to propose concrete alternatives to the current policy. As a result of the ICE Out organizing efforts, AIRC was successful in pressuring the Austin Police Department to start issuing citations rather than arrests in February 2009 for

certain non-violent offenses. Currently, the committee is working on a comprehensive report looking at the effects of collaboration between federal immigration enforcement and the local jail on immigrant communities in Austin. The report will combine quantitative and qualitative forms of data gathering and analysis.

The Raids Preparedness Committee was created as a response to the surge in immigration raids that occurred throughout the country in 2008. AIRC became concerned with the possibility of a raid in the immigrant community in Austin and as a result the Raids Preparedness Committee created a Know Your Rights Training for the community. Through trainings with grassroots groups, churches and non-profit organizations, hundreds of immigrants have been empowered to stand up for their rights and speak against violations.

The Welcoming Committee is an effort to educate non-immigrants on immigration issues in order to change the dialogue around immigration and dispel myths and stereotypes about immigrants. The Welcoming Committee is made up of welcoming ambassadors who have given presentations to middle and high school students, small business employees and rotary club members. The Welcoming Committee has plans to launch a strategic communications campaign using paid media to disseminate positive messages about immigrants and recruit new allies to the AIRC.

Before leaving for law school in May 2010, Caroline presented the AIRC steering committee an organizing model led by and for immigrants, the *Promotores de Derechos Humanos/* Promoters of Human Rights modeled after the El Paso Border Network for Human Rights Promotores model. Caroline envisioned the Promotores Model as

replacing the ICE out of Travis Jail and the Raids Preparedness Committee and also having more representation and voice by immigrants in the decision making of the AIRC. The *Promotores de Derechos Humanos* model is based on organizing within immigrant communities. Human rights promoters are trained on human and U.S. Constitutional rights using a train the trainer methodology. From the onset there was a resistance from a few AIRC steering committee members on the *Promotores Project*, mainly from two individuals, one steering committee member representing PDL, and another from a university activist student. Both of these AIRC steering committee members also had strong ties to PDL as one of the individuals worked for PDL and the other volunteered as an organizer and photographer for PDL. Both of these steering committee members were resistant to the *Promotores* Model partly because they felt excluded from it. One of the requirements to be a Human Rights Promoter is that you have to be an immigrant. Since these two AIRC steering committee members were not; they questioned the legitimacy and usefulness of the model. The discussions during the AIRC steering committee meetings during February and early summer 2010 centered around the role of immigrants and allies in the steering committee and AIRC, "monitoring" the Promotores Project, and what would AIRC membership involve for the people who participated exclusively as Human Rights Promoters. As one steering committee member put it "*seria buena idea que los gringos fueran a observar uno de los comités para entender un poquito del trabajo*/ it would be a good idea for gringos to observe one of the committees to understand their work. This individual was referring to white steering committee members, who he himself was one of (i.e., white steering committee member). The AIRC

steering committee agreed that it would watch closely the project and re-evaluate it a few months later

The Human Rights Promoters who had taken the training in February 2010 were predominantly Mexican and Nicaraguan immigrants. About fifteen had taken the training; their ages ranged from twenty four to forty eight, and included both male and females. One of the participants who took the training was also a steering committee member, Xenia, observed and listened to the discussions taking place during the AIRC steering committee around the Human Rights Promoters. Although Xenia understands and speaks intermediate English, she was unable to grasp the discussions why other non-immigrant AIRC steering committee members resisted the implementation of the project. Xenia like most of the immigrants who took the training were convinced that this was the model that AIRC should follow if AIRC wanted to be an immigrant rights coalition for and led by immigrants.

> The coalition would like to make decisions for us [Human Rights Promoters]. This Project needs to be taken care of, well protected so that other people who have nothing to do with the Project can't decide for it

Xenia understood from the beginning that any decision made by AIRC regarding the project should be done by the *Promotores* who were directly involved and invested in it. For Xenia, protecting the Human Rights Promoters project meant that immigrants must make their own decisions and not be made for them by the coalition or its steering committee members. With the hiring of the new coordinator in June 210, Ester Reyes, who is an immigrant herself and understands the importance and central role of the

Human Rights Promoters in the work of AIRC, the project has grown in strength and autonomy.

Conclusion

In this chapter I examined the tensions that led to the split of AIRC into two factions following the May 1st 2006 marches largely due to the International Socialist Organization (ISO). The role of non-immigrant activists has been important since the inception of the AIRC. Non-immigrants, in particular progressive whites have been allies in the immigrant rights movement and have provided both financial and expertise skills in social justice issues. The role of non-immigrants was more apparent in the early stages of the coalition but as the AIRC recruited immigrants to the membership and steering committee the role of non-immigrants was behind the scenes providing support and being ally.

In this chapter I also discussed the 2007 retreat and the hiring of the coordinator for the AIRC, Caroline Keating-Guerra, as an important milestone in the stability and growth of AIRC. During Caroline's two years (2008-2010) she was able to create an infrastructure for the coalition by establishing committees around policy, raids preparedness, ICE out of Travis County, and introducing the model of the Human Rights Promoters. The Human Rights Promoters have been able to defend the project with the support of the new coordinator, Esther Reyes. The incipient coalition that emerged in 2006 to organize against H.R. 4437 has become in 2011 the *Promotores* Project—a membership based organization.

CHAPTER 6
"THEY ARE THE BACKBONE OF THE MOVEMENT": LATINAS IN THE IMMIGRANT RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN AUSTIN, TEXAS

The Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition mobilized an unprecedented number of allies and immigrants in the spring of 2006 but who was behind these mobilizations? In this chapter I examine the individuals involved in the coalition, I place at the center of analysis the role of Latina women during the planning of the protests of 2006 and its aftermath.

Latina Activism

Latina feminist scholarship emphasizes building theory and knowledge based on women's agency in everyday life, what Milagros Ricort & Rudy Danta (2003) refer to as "*convivencia diaria.*"[49] Recent work by Martinez (2010) on the 2006 mobilizations in Colorado reveals the importance of immigrant and non-immigrant women in recruiting and mobilizing their family members to participate in the marches. Martinez work on Latino and immigrant grassroots organizations reveals that grassroots organizations mobilized women by framing the issue of H.R. 4437 as a family issue that emphasized women's "roles in the family and the significance of their participation for their children" (141). My dissertation research builds on the work of Martinez (2010) by examining the role of Latinas in the 2006 mobilizations and its aftermath.

[49] Feminist scholars, social movement scholars and Latina(o)/Chicana(o) scholars have long noted the importance of women in social protests. See for example (Garcia 1989; Hardy-Fanta 1993; Ochoa 2004; Pardo 1990; Peña 2007; Ricourt & Danta 2003; Ruiz & Korrol 2006; Segura & Facio 2008; Tellez 2008).

In Chapter three, I stressed the importance of the emergence of Immigrant Rights Coalitions (IRCs) throughout the U.S. mobilizing massive and interregional grassroots support. The Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition like many IRCs throughout the country was an important part of the success of the 2006 mobilizations but someone had to call for its formation and organize it. My ethnographic research over the course of twenty-four months, reveals the increased presence of women at the grassroots level, networking and bringing diverse organizations together. Who are these Latinas and how are they working at the local level for the advancement of the Immigrant Rights Movement?

Mobilizing Latina Activism in Austin, Texas

Alma, who at the time of the interview was an undergraduate student at UT Austin remembers seeing the 2006 marches in L.A and Chicago in the news with her friend Karina and feeling inspired to be part of something similar in Austin. As she narrates:

> We saw Chicago and we were like wow! look at all those people in L.A. On Sunday, Karina and I went to *Gueros*, we were having appetizers, we were like wow!, have you seen all these marches, that's crazy, like you know nothing's happening in Texas, so we are like let's do one, o.k, o.k, let's do one in Austin, o.k, o.k, let's do one (interview, June 2009).

Feeling inspired and realizing that nothing was happening in Austin, Alma and Karina began making plans to have a march on April 10 in Austin, Texas. They immediately called their network of friends both from UT and the broader Austin

community to plan for a march in Austin. Alma remembers calling her sorority friends and Latino clubs at the University of Texas at Austin:

> I called my best friend who was in a sorority and I knew they were going to have a sorority meeting. "Hey Mary, we decided we want to do a pro-immigrant march ask your sorority if they want to join on, like a sponsor so we can have names." They said yes, we send out an e-mail from the LLC [Latino Leadership Council] list service, which had like 30 Latino base organizations. We were watching all these marches and I thought that we needed to have one in Austin. The response that we started getting was "give me more information; what do we need to do?" (interview, June 2009).

Just about the same time that Alma and Karina were planning for a march at UT Austin, *Projecto Defensa Laboral*/Workers Defense Project executive director was investigating if a march was planned in the area. Rebeca contacted the Center for Community Change, a non-profit organization in D.C to find out if a march was planned in Austin. After finding out that no march was scheduled, Rebeca called "a meeting of different organizations" to plan for a march. This was around March 27, "just ten days before the April 10 march" said Rebeca. With less than two weeks, a march was pulled off on April 10 in Austin, Texas attracting over 10,000 people, making it one of the largest demonstrations in Austin in 30 years (Castillo 2006: A01). This gave birth to the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC). Rebeca says that "we worked really fast and like met with people every two days and then there was a small committee of main coordinators."

There were actually two marches on April 10, one by UT students who planned a walkout to join with supporters at the Texas State Capitol and a march at the capitol that was to end at the Federal Building.[50] Both Clarisa from MEChA and Monica from University Leadership Initiative (ULI) worked closely for the rally at UT Austin and remember that there was a lot of coordination. Monica, a thirty two year old Mexican immigrant was a ULI member during the time the marches took place. She remembers that ULI

> was very focused in bringing students to the march. We worked with several organizations like LULAC, MEChA, with other organizations at UT. More than anything we focused on UT in getting more organizations (April 2009).

ULI and MEChA were concentrating their efforts in recruiting college students for the rally. "MEChA played a role in the organizing of the walkout and rally at UT Austin which was done along with other local student organizations like LLC-the Latino Leadership Council and others" said Clarisa. Although both the UT walkout and march at the Texas State Capitol happened on April 10, there was not one central leader but rather decentralized leadership. The leaders were all women and not men.

[50] There was tension between the new generation of Mexican American and Chicana students and older immigrants with regards to the planned UT Austin rally and the use of the U.S flag. The new generation of college students felt it was important to have a rally at UT Austin to show support and solidarity with the immigrant community. However, some students in particular the self-identified Chicanas/os had mixed feelings in displaying the U.S. flag or encouraging people to take U.S flags with them to the rally because they felt that the U.S flag represented imperialism, inequality and second class citizenship. On the other hand, older Mexican Americans and recent immigrants felt that it was important to take U.S. flags to show patriotism and their assimilation to U.S society. There were several discussion over this issue and ensued in several meetings ultimately leading to no consensus. Those who wanted to take flags took them to the marches and those who didn't opted not to.

Latinas who were not part of or affiliated with organizations or student groups in Austin also contributed to the organizing of the marches. Berenice, a Mexican immigrant from Coahuila Mexico was working as radio host at KOOP's 91.7 community radio made sure that her audience was informed of the ramifications of H.R. 4437.

> Berenice: I started to distribute flyers so that people would attend [the march]
> Interviewer**:** How did you do that? Did you contact other organizations?
> Berenice: Yes, well, because I worked at the radio I knew a lot of people, so people that heard me told me I am a volunteer at this organization and I can distribute flyers and I can go with you…At the radio station I started promoting the march, it was inviting people to support and to join in solidarity with the cause (interview, May 2008).

Berenice encouraged her audience to attend the march and also distributed flyers at local Latino shopping centers. Berenice is assertive when it comes to outreaching in public venues. She says "I don't ask permission because if you ask permission they won't let you so you have to do it." Similar to Berenice, Veronica, a Colombian immigrant distributed flyers at local grocery stores where Latinos shop. Veronica said that she started "going to places where there are more immigrants to distribute flyers like Fiesta, La Hacienda Market, and even the *barrios* [neighborhoods]." Veronica's actions may at first appear trivial but for her it was a political stand that she had to negotiate with her employer during her work hours. Veronica works for a social service organization that focuses on low income families in the zip code 78744 of Austin. Veronica is the director of Connect 4 Youth mentoring program that offers after-school group mentoring sessions that focus on building relationships between teenagers and adults. Teenagers learn

leadership and communication skills. Veronica's involvement with the various schools in the 78744 zip code allowed her access to distribute information to parents regarding H.R. 4437. This is what she had to say:

> I remember that I tried taking information to the schools and I remember that my boss told me once that I couldn't take a stance, that I could have my beliefs and opinions but that I couldn't take that information to the schools during work hours because it was like if the agency was giving that information and I also remember that a counselor at a school told me the same thing. So I said to myself, I need to take that information to the people, so I stayed at the parking lots after work. I am no longer an employee, I am just a human being that is distributing information to the people in the parking lot and they would laugh because they knew who I was (interview, February 2009).

In negotiating her role as a worker for a social service organization and her political beliefs, Veronica decided that after work she would inform her clients about H.R. 4437 and the march. She stayed at the parking lot of the schools she visited and distributed information to parents. Veronica eloquently says that her participation was not in the planning process but rather "in the execution process, I was never really in the planning process." This captures the reality of many Latinas in the immigrant rights movement in Austin, Texas who were not involved in the planning and decision making of the marches but were very important in the "execution" of the work as exemplified with Bernice's and Veronica's narrative.

Las Mujeres **in the AIRC: Post 2006 Marches**

The people who called for and organized the 2006 marches were largely led by Latinas. The person who took on the leadership for the planning of marches and subsequent birth of AIRC was Rebeca, executive director for *Projecto Defensa Laboral*(PDL). AIRC was housed at PDL for two years until the coalition received seed funding from an anonymous donor in 2008 to hire a full time coordinator. Caroline Keating-Guerra, a self-identified Latina became the coordinator for the AIRC from 2008 to 2010.

Before Caroline was hired, Rebeca and a few others were doing the work for the AIRC, mainly in organizing the yearly May 1st march and lobbying at the Texas state Capitol. Nancy, a former graduate student in Public Policy at UT Austin and who now works for a Texas state representative remembers helping with the planning of two marches in 2007, April and May

> The one of April was to address a lot of anti-immigrant legislation that had been filed in the Texas House. The April one was focused on state-policy and the May one was just really just to say, it's been a year since the Sensenbrenner bill… we are here, we are still present (interview, April 2009).

Others involved included Rosalia from *Immigrantes Latinos en Acción* who did most of the outreach for the Spanish language media

> We got involved in the media committee and what we did was basically once we had the logistics information we send it out to the newspapers in Spanish and English. We did this for the radio and we went to Univisión (interview, June 2008).

Not involved with AIRC work directly but indirectly as an ally of the coalition, ULI organized a citizenship drive in February that same year. Both Monica and Alma from ULI felt that it was important to educate immigrants about voting. "*Hoy Marchamos, Mañana Votamos*"/Today we march, tomorrow we vote was a popular chant used by immigrants and supporters of immigrant rights in the 2006 mobilizations. The chants turned into a campaign called *Ya Es Hora* ("It's Time") launched in Los Angeles in January 2007 as a strategy with national reach aimed at mobilizing Latin American immigrants to become citizens (Ayón 2009). *Ya Es Hora* "captured the sense of urgency awakened by the 2006 marches and the sense of an entire community acting together" (Ayon 2009: 11).

On February 2007, ULI, state Representative Eddie Rodriguez, and the National Association of Elected Latino Officials (NALEO), carried out a Citizenship Day fair at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of public Affairs at the University of Texas At Austin. The goal of the Citizenship Fair was to encourage eligible immigrants to apply for citizenship and subsequently register to vote. The event attracted over 300 people.

During this time, Rebeca was carrying out the work of the AIRC but felt that it was not sustainable as she had her own program work as the executive director for PDL. Rebeca said "our organization [PDL] had been doing a lot of the logistics up to that point, and I personally was very tired of it." Feeling burned out and not having the time and staff capacity to carry the work of AIRC, Rebecca obtained seed funding from an anonymous donor to hire a coordinator for AIRC.

Las Mujeres in the AIRC: 2008 to the Present

The AIRC was formed by organizations, that is, the founding members were heads and/or staff members of non-profits. This created a coalition with a strong presence of organizations but with little grassroots base and with nearly no immigrant representation. At that time, Jimena from American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and Rosalia from *Latinos Inmigrantes en Acción* (ILA) were some of the immigrants involved.

Immediately after Caroline was hired, she organized the 2008 annual May 1st march and in the next couple of months she created several sub-committees, recruited people to the steering committee, began building AIRC alliances and relationships with other organizations in Austin and started to develop AIRC's grassroots base. A crucial moment in the formation of the coalition and Latinas participation was when Caroline began recruiting between 2009 and 2010 people to the steering committee from immigrant backgrounds and ties to the immigrant community.

This was pivotal for AIRC in terms of its presence in the immigrant community and the role of Latinas. Latinas recruited to the steering committee brought with them their ties to the immigrant community and networks of other organizations as well as their own personal experience of activism and being from the community. In some ways, this led AIRC in a new direction, a more visible and action-oriented coalition with a grassroots base that has been able to respond to urgent situations. Two events are worth illustrating, an Arizona solidarity trip against SB 1070 and a protest at the Texas State Capitol in April 2010 both led and organized by Latinas.

On Monday, April 19 2010 thousands of people gathered at the Arizona statehouse for the 24 hour vigil that was ongoing since the state legislature was considering on passing SB 1070 (Archibold 2010). Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act also known as Arizona SB 1070 is for immigrants and allies of immigrant rights an anti-immigrant bill that racially profiles immigrants and citizens. The law allows local law enforcement officers to question anyone about their immigration status. Thousands of people protested around the country when Governor Jan Brewer signed SB 1070 into law on April 23. The outrage produced by Arizona's new law caused many people to protest and march on May 1st in Austin, Texas and other parts of the country. On April 22, the AIRC sent a delegation of five people to Arizona in solidarity. Gloria and three members of the AIRC organized a delegation to go to Arizona to join the rally and vigil outside of the Arizona State Capitol. Members of AIRC and close friends were telling Gloria not to go because of her precarious immigration status. Gloria is an undocumented immigrant who has lived and worked in Austin for the last ten years. She was determined to go to Arizona regardless of the risk of possible deportation if caught by border patrol officers in El Paso and/or Arizona. The Border Patrol routinely sets up road blocks and stops cars on I-10 to search for drugs and undocumented immigrants. For Gloria it was important to be in Arizona to show solidarity and let people know that Austin is present. The day Gloria left she told a group of AIRC members that she was not worried about getting deported. The worst case scenario she said is "getting deported", which would allow her to go to Mexico and see her 13 year old daughter that she has not seen for the last ten years.

Ester is another courageous Latina immigrant who in less than 24 hours organized a protest outside the Texas state capitol on April 24, 2010 in solidarity with the people in Arizona and to say "we won't allow SB 1070 in Texas". Through phone calls and text-messaging, Ester contacted her network of friends and AIRC members about organizing a protest at the state capitol. The response she received was not what she expected as the Reform Immigration Committee of AIRC was planning the May 1st march the following week. Members of the planning committee were persuading Ester to cancel the protest and focus her energies on the planning for May 1st. Ester was discouraged and at one point wanted to cancel the protest but she changed her mind. In less than twenty-four hours Ester called her co-workers, friends, and members of AIRC to show up at the Texas state Capitol on Saturday, April 24. About fifteen people gathered to protest Arizona's bill outside the Texas capitol. People were holding signs that read "*Arizona, estamos contigo*"/Arizona, we are with you, "*Todos Somos Arizona*"/We are all Arizona."

Both Gloria and Ester are not passive agents but strong and courageous women who put their lives on the line for their beliefs; they would not take NO for an answer and instead converted the threat of SB 1070 into action. There are many more women like Gloria and Ester who are passionate about immigrant rights but channel their energies in different areas. Karina captures this diversity when she says "women really care about a really broad range of issues and not just their own particular issues; they want things that are right for people not just right for them." This is exemplified by the current work that Latina immigrants are doing as *Promotores de Derechos Humanos*/Promoters of Human Rights for the AIRC.

In March 2010 the AIRC began a project called *Promotores de Derechos Humanos* modeled after El Paso Border Network for Human Rights Promotores model. The *Promotores de Derechos Humanos* principle is based is organizing within immigrant communities. Human rights promoters are trained on human and constitutional rights using a "train the trainer" methodology. The AIRC started with seven committees of *Promotores de Derechos Humanos* and currently has eight active committees, each committee having between five and seven immigrants. These committees are led by Latina and Latino immigrants and meet in locations that are safe spaces that convey "*mucha seguridad y mucha confianza*." Xenia, an immigrant from Mexico in her early forties is one of the human rights promoters and strongly believes in this model of organizing that directly involves immigrants. Xenia says that the intention of Human Rights Promoters is to

> Involve the Hispanic community to educate itself, after receiving this education, to organize ourselves in an effective manner. After organizing to begin to identify what are the problems that we are facing and how can we organize ourselves to fight for the needs that we have… This model repeats itself, the people that you educate are the people that will educate other people. Let's suppose that I have five people, maybe two or three of them are promoters and they have their own committee and they are educating others, in this way, the web is increasing (interview, June 2010).

The human rights promoter model as Xenia describes is to involve the Hispanic community, the immigrant community of Austin, Texas. The Human Rights promoters model is based on grassroots base organizing within immigrant communities in which

immigrants identify, educate and organize around issues that directly impact them. It is a training-for-trainers model that trains participants to become knowledgeable about human and constitutional rights, policy issues, as well as immigrant rights issues affecting immigrant families. Participants who complete these *platicas/charlas* are then able to have their own committee and educate and train other immigrants.

A lot of work lays ahead for Xenia and the rest of the human rights promoters who have a strong commitment to this model. This is exemplified in their most recent training they organized on July 6 on "The History of Immigration 101" where approximately 17 people attended. Latinas like Xenia are dedicated in advancing the immigrant rights movement and some see their involvement as a calling, a "greater duty in life but not something like oh my God it's so heavy, it's not letting me do my own stuff, no, something like I want to do something, like I want to help my community" commented Antonia, an immigrant from Jalisco, México. Clarisa succinctly captures the essential role of women in Austin, Texas.

> People have talked that a women can better lead an non-profit organization because non-profits require like not just administration, it's also like your home, like when you are building community you are thinking about it as a family and *mujeres* [women] have that ability to do so many things at one time. They are involved with administration of the money, they are involved with the planning of the program, they are involved with you know the relationship building in the community. A non-profit really has to leverage all these different things, and I think that from what I see women based on their experience are always having to be the backbone of families, you know they've been the ones to keep the movement strong, you know, they are the backbone of the movement, they really

> are. They do so much, you know, *andan donde quiera* [they are everywhere] (interview, June 2008).

The women in this study as Clarisa so eloquently describes are "the backbone of families" and the "backbone of the movement." Although critics write that the momentum of the 2006 marches have declined, this dissertation research shows that the movement continues, perhaps not in the same capacity or number of people protesting but in organizing and creating a long term sustained movement. Although there is no sign that immigration reform will happen this year or the next¸ immigrants, in particular, *las mujeres* continue their efforts in organizing and bringing attention to human rights abuses in border regions and interior parts of the country. In Austin, Texas, efforts revolve around organizing and creating a grassroots base and educating immigrants about their rights through *Promotores de Derechos Humanos*/Human Rights Promoters.

DOING LEADERSHIP

As demonstrated in this chapter, *las mujeres* have been involved in the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition at its inception and played a central role in the planning of the 2006 marches. Latinas continue to be pivotal actors in the sustainability of the coalition but how do they articulate their leadership? What is leadership for these *mujeres?* Past studies on leadership analyzed the traits and characteristics of leaders (mainly men) with scant attention to the factor of gender (Lord, Devander, and Alliger 1988; Mumford et al. 2000; Northouse 2004; Yukl 2006). From the late 1980s to early

1990s Chicana/Latina scholars began challenging this male gendered domain by arguing that leadership is relational rather than positional. That is, leadership is not about formal leadership positions nor about power or control but can be embedded in the everyday lives of women.

In the interviews, four key processes of leadership emerged that were more or less in sync with previous studies: (1) shared leadership, (2) leadership serves the community, (3) leadership leads by obeying, and (4) leadership unfolds behind the scenes. The women in this study understood their leadership as a process that is shared as opposed to held by one person. For these women, leadership centered on serving, rather than being served, that leadership leads by obeying, and can happen behind the scenes instead in public view. The second and third dimension of leadership may appear colonial and oppressive. However, a close and more critical look at these women's narratives reveals that far from being oppressed or exposed to colonization, these Chicanas and Latinas are breaking away from traditionally patriarchal views of leadership as they create unorthodox views of leading their families and communities. Women reclaim ownership of language and give them new and non-oppressive meanings. In particular the third element may come across as inconsistent with Chicana/Latina feminist theorizing. However, here lays the beauty of understanding women's way of interpreting leadership through what may come across as a contradiction at first glance — *mandar obedeciendo.* The creative linguistic and ideological novelty that took me by surprise, I further discuss in the section "leadership leads by obeying."

The way Chicanas/Latinas I interviewed describe leadership is a way of doing, an action and process, an act of social engagement, rather than a series of traits, skills, or capital. In sum, *doing leadership* involves interactional activities; it is situated in the performance of these activities, it is continuous and recurring accomplishment that is carried out behind the scenes and in front of others. Simply put by Paula, a Chilean immigrant in her late thirties, "see she's just like me, you know, and I can be just like her *and what she's doing* [authors emphasis] isn't giving up everything, you know, not having a life, not having family, she still can have those things and be part of leadership." For these women, leadership is lived as part and parcel of their everyday life experiences as daughters, sisters, mothers, wives, workers, rather than distinct from them.

Shared Leadership

The women in this study described leadership as "collective" and "shared," rather than a responsibility that *one* leader must bear. For them, shared leadership means that "the leader is not above others but remains part of the group" (Bordas 2007, 80). Consider for example, the quote by Paula, a Chilean immigrant who has over 15 years of community organizing experience. She critiques leadership on two fronts: the traditional male charismatic leader and the notion that leadership should be held by one person. She argues that replacing a male with a female leader is problematic and not the solution because it is not about replacing one gender over the other, it is about collective leadership, where no one holds all the power, even amongst women. She elaborates,

> We shouldn't replace one individual male charismatic leader for an individual female charismatic leader. I think part of the gender analysis was about thinking about new models of leadership, you know, that is more collective, that it isn't where if you take one person out, the whole thing falls part, which is usually the case where a lot of these other things, or how movements have fallen apart when they literally take them out, when they get rid of someone.

Paula's argument stresses the need to offer collective engagement that is inclusive and sustainable for families, in particular mothers with children. For Paula, collective leadership is the only type that will sustain long term change, acknowledging that it is untenable to rely on one or a few individuals to do the work. Moreover, with shared leadership, everyone is accountable to each other, thus allowing them to keep egos in check and prevent individuals from usurping power or co-opting the broader collective. Paula amplifies this by saying:

> We know that power corrupts everybody, any of us can be corrupted by power, any of us can be co-opted, *cualquiera* [anybody] but we make sure that we don't have that happen to us, is that collective accountability of working with each other in a formalized kinda collective leadership structure. So, *si a una se le va los humos a la cabeza, alguien les va a decir* [if one of them lets it go to their head, someone is going to tell them], what's wrong with you? come back down here, you know, *quien te cres?* [who do you think you are?]" and kinda reminding

ourselves that it isn't about some kinda of individual self-promotion or things like that.

Clarisa, a self-identified Chicana in her early mid-twenties involved with the student organization MEChA at the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) is also critical about the traditional approach to leadership and suggests a leadership that is shared because everyone has "the potential to be leaders." She acknowledges that César Chávez and Martin Luther King contributed significantly to the Chicano and Civil Rights Movement, but also argues that the movement did not end with their passing. As she suggests:

> *Yo creo que* [I think] we should redefine this whole idea of leadership. Like one of the criticism like a lot of people now a days have of the Chicano Movement of the 60s especially with regard to César Chávez and the farmworkers movement was that there was this idea that there was this one leader, César Chávez, right, or this one leader Martin Luther King who like changed the whole scene, who made all these changes, right, and like with their death ended the movement right. And it was like no! We all have the potential to be leaders and that the power needs to be shared collectively and that it should not only come from like these individuals who think they have all the answers to all our problems.

Clarisa recounts a time she was organizing a vigil and press conference to bring attention to a family detention center in Hutto, Texas. Clarisa invited an activist known

for raising awareness of family detention centers in the United States through the use of walkathons along the U.S.-Mexico border. For Clarisa, news stories focused exclusively, "this like super amazing activist," thus rendering opaque the role of women in organizing the Hutto vigil. She said,

> He introduced himself as being the person who brought Hutto to light, (but) that's not true because we have been involved in this organizing since the very beginning. Who's this guy who is saying he started the movement against Hutto? There's credit to the work that he does, I think that, *arrasa con todo* [he takes everything with him], it's his thing, *él se da el aire porque los medios le han dado ese aire* [he feels the winds of greatness because the media has been giving him that air], they love and they follow him, they like that approach to the story.

Clarisa is college educated and articulates and understanding of power relations, hegemony, and patriarchy within the discourse of leadership. Her zealous work in organizing and coordinating the Hutto vigil and press conference was overshadowed by the presence of the (male) activist. Clarisa exposes how the traditionally patriarchal media in both the mainstream and ethnic media, in particular Univision tweaks stories that align to a preferred (male) gender that disregard the roles of Latina leadership. Both media coverage and male dominance converge in Clarisa's critique of the Hutto vigil and calls for a leadership that is shared collectively.

For Paula, shared leadership is the key to long-term sustained social change. She reflected, "if we don't start thinking of leadership as something that everybody can be part of, then we are not gonna create any kind of real sustained social change in our communities." Paula's and Clarisa's quotes support Méndez-Negrete's (1999, 29) finding that women prefer collective leadership that is "not to stand or act alone." This type of collective leadership is not limited to this study, for example, Sista II Sista (SIIS) comes to mind. A collective of women of color of different ages, Sista II Sista is a Brooklyn-wide community-based organization located in Bushwick, New York and it has a collective body structure where the organization's leadership and decision-making model is nonhierarchical. The organization believes that long term sustained change comes "through collective leadership and struggle" (Sista II Sista 2006, 200).

Collective leadership is not restricted to Chicana/Latinas. Juana Bordas (2007) observes that shared leadership is a time-honored practice for contemporary Native Americans who have historically a circular approach to leadership so that no one is elevated above others. Bordas writes that "just as identity is collective, so too the source of leadership is collective. A leader serves and is responsible to his or her community, tribe, and people" (77).

Reflecting this dynamic, Bernice, a thirty-year old undocumented immigrant from México who has been living in the United States for the past seven years critiques the notion of leadership led by one individual who is socially worshipped as an idol. She finds this troubling because when leaders make mistakes this can translate to chaos and possible collapse of a struggle. She says,

> I am against that one idolatrizes someone. Unfortunately not only in Latin America, everywhere people have the tendency to put all the weight in one person and they see him/her like a God, like if he/she can do everything and that he/she doesn't make mistakes and if he/she makes mistakes then everything is wrong, everything is chaos and everything falls apart, the struggle and all that. For me, a leader is a human being that has initiative, that has desire to fight and all that but he/she will never accomplish this if he/she is not surrounded by people with the same desire that works toward the same objective, struggle.

Put simply, a leader for Berenice is someone who shares the same objective and needs and has the desire to fight for the common good. This leads to my second element of leadership, leadership serves the community.

Leadership serves the community

Serving the community is also a key factor of leadership for the women I interviewed. For them, leadership involves service to the community. The idea of "service" and "serving to others" (mainly men) may at first sound heterosexist and patriarchal, what Chicana/Latina feminist scholars have advocated us to move away. Interestingly, the women in this study are taking ownership of language as they reinvent and redefine more nuanced, creative and liberating ways of understanding of service. This process illustrates in some way Juana Bordas's reflections (2007, 117) as she reminds us that serving the community is "being a good steward of one's community."

For example, Veronica, a Colombian immigrant in her mid-thirties who has lived in the United States for nine years and volunteered for a local grassroots Latino organization in Austin for the past six years described leadership as having the ability to listen and negotiate for the common good of all and not for personal gain,

> Who is a leader? A person that has ideas, that listens; that's a virtue, and who is capable of negotiating. The majority of the leaders that I have identified are looking after their own interests, interests that may not benefit us

Being able to listen is important for Veronica who believes that leaders can seek their own gain without benefiting the larger community. Other women said that a leader must understand and be directly involved in helping *la gente* in the community to become self-sufficient without being paternalistic. Rosalía captures this when she says,

> For me a leader is a person that has a heart to serve the community but not only to serve but understands the problems and the needs of the community, of the people, that guides you, that doesn't feel sorry for you or that gives you material things. On the contrary, [a leader] educates you; [a leader] gives you educational material. For me a leader teachers you how to adapt to the life in this country but teaches you without being paternalistic, only in a self-sufficient way.

A leader that is paternalistic does not exist in Rosalía's narrative but rather a leader that helps others to realize their own potential to be self-sufficient. Rosalía mentions the qualities that a leader should possess regardless of gender. A leader who is not self-centered, but rather cares for the well-being of others in a non-paternalistic

matter, a legitimate claim and what a leader is supposed to be according to Rosalía. This is what Maria Loya did for Rosalía, a community activist who worked for El Buen Samaritano, a non-profit and social ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas:

> She taught me many simple things that I did not know, for example, learning how to use the computer. It's not that she taught me how to use the computer but I saw her act on issues. She would invite me to meetings in the community, city council, the capitol. When she saw injustices she tried to find a solution to the problem, but she did not try to find the solution on her own, she would include people and would say you have to do it, you can do it, you have to learn.

In the course of her experience with Maria Loya, Rosalía developed her computer skills but most importantly her self-confidence. Rosalía realized that she could be part of change and find solutions to problems that plague her community because Maria was modeling this leadership. Hence, for Rosalía, a leader is someone who is able to address and serve the needs of others without being paternalistic but instead instilling women's self-esteem and self-confidence.

Equally important, leadership is not about having an eloquent discourse and formal education but rather being involved in the community without personal gain and understand the issues. This is what Gloria, an undocumented immigrant from México in her early thirties had to say:

> The important thing about a leader is not that he talks and talks rather the important thing is that people believe what you are saying, that they have trust in

> what you are saying, that you are not a talker that is lying but a leader that is also involved in the community. A leader for me does not have to have personal gain, nothing; it has to be a benefit for the community because if a leader is thinking about personal gain, that person is definitely not working for the community.

Gloria's quote touches on the dilemma of leadership that scholars have noted. On the one hand, leadership implies being proactive, assuming responsibility, and being accountable to the community. On the other hand, leaders are expected to remain part of the group and not stand out from others and seek personal gains (Bordas 2007). The latter is important for the women in this study who believe that a leader is someone who is close to the community, understands the communities' needs, issues, and is directly involved. Take for instance Esmeralda, a Mexican American in her early twenties and Antonia a naturalized U.S. citizen from México in her early forties had to say:

> That they believe in what they are saying, that they are passionate, that they outreach, that they be really humbled, and directly involved with the people, feel what other people are going through. (Esmeralda)

> That people feel connected to, to really represent the people who he or she is speaking for and that is interested in change. Like I said he/she might not even have to do much, just be the microphone that's all. (Antonia)

Both Esmeralda and Antonia believe that leadership is about understanding the needs of the community and guiding people in the process of finding solutions and

making social change possible. What is different from Antonia's narrative is her understanding that a leader is not necessarily someone who has to do all the work but rather be the "microphone" to convey people's concerns. Traditional notions of leadership are still present in Latinas narratives. When I asked her if she considered herself a leader her first response was to say yes, but then became hesitant and said no.

> Interviewer: Based on your definition of what a leader is, do you consider yourself a leader?
>
> Antonia: [long pause] I would like to say yes but I don't think so.
>
> Interviewer: Tell me why?
>
> Antonia: Because I haven't had the chance to see if I'm a real leader or not, like I haven't represented a group of people
>
> Interviewer: Didn't you go to the capitol? to Washington?
>
> Antonia: Yes, well yes yes [laughs], but I don't know if I am very charismatic, I don't think I am very charismatic, and I don't have like, to be a leader you have to be patient with all the people and sometimes I'm not very patient [laughs], so I don't think I'm a leader.

Antonia was a volunteer and served on the board of directors for *Inmigrantes Latinos en Accion* (ILA) for over five years. She was in charge of ILA's quarterly bilingual newsletter, organized one cookout as part of ILA's *Cocina Latina*, testified several times in the Texas state Capitol, participated in the May 1st rally's in 2006, 2007, and even went to a trip to Washington D.C. in 2008 to lobby at Texas representatives.

However, Antonia does not view herself as a leader. Antonia views charisma as one of the traits of leadership and does not see herself as a leader partly because she does not see herself as someone who has charismatic qualities. Antonia's narrative reveals that women continue to internalize traditional elements of leadership even when they are redefining and conceptualizing leadership and involved in community organizing.

Leadership leads by obeying

Linked to this element of leadership that serves the community is leadership that leads by obeying, which means to lead by what the people want and not by what the leader wishes. *Mandar obedeciendo* illustrates a linguistic dimension, which appears to convey an oppressive message, especially in México. A traditionally patriarchal nation, Mexican society has used both, *mandar* (give orders) and *obecer* (obey) as part of a system of beliefs and practices creating disadvantages for women. However, I learned from women that when we look at this expression ideologically — that is, from the ideological perspective of participants' standpoint — *mandar obedeciendo* means truly listening to what people want you to do as their leader, it means being respectful to people's needs and demands. *Mandar obedeciendo* means being equal while practicing true solidarity and respect for collective needs and demands. Jimena, an immigrant from México City in her mid-sixties has over twenty-five years of popular education experience and has a PhD in Language, Reading & Culture. Jimena migrated to the United States when she was in her mid-forties. This is what Jimena said about leadership as *mandar obedeciendo*:

> I take a lot of the credit of the Zapatista movement on how they focus on leadership which is one of the mottos is *mandar obedeciendo* [to order by obeying]. I think those two words say a lot, which is how to lead by obeying what people want. I think this is how I see leadership, *mandar obedeciendo, no mandar desobedeciendo lo que la gente quiere y lo que yo hago, sino obedecer lo que la gente quiere que yo haga como su líder* [order by obeying, not order by disobeying what people want and what I do, rather obey what people want me to do as their leader]. So it's turning around the role of the leader. The leader is not the one that goes ahead and all the rest follow them.

The paradox of *mandar obedeciendo* can be understood within the standpoint of Jimena's social location and lived experiences. Jimena was born in México City and grew up to witness first-hand the student movements of the late 1960s, and the 1985 earthquake in Mexico City. The latter contributed to the emergence of new movement organizations as a result of government failure to respond to the needs of its citizens (Collier 1999; Haber 2006). Jimena was particularly influenced by the 1994 upraising of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*, *EZLN*) in México and the emergence of a national Indigenous women's movement.

"Mandar Obedeciendo" is in fact one of the foundational principles of the EZLN, a movement that has roots in Indigenous communities which has reframed in creative ways the language traditionally used in social movements in Mexican society. Comandante Tacho (2007) gave a speech at the Second Encounter of the Zapatistas with

the peoples of the World regarding the seven principles of rule by obeying. This is what he said about "lead by obeying" as an ethical principle at the core of this social movement:

> the people are the ones that decide, those that lead do not make laws or give orders. The movement is led by the people, not the spokepersons or representatives.

The principle of *mandar obedeciendo* for the EZLN embodies that "true leaders follow the will of the people, the desires of the larger community" (Some Zapatista Principles and Practice 2009, 1). The aforementioned principle that Jimena cites from the Zapatista movement embodies the values that center on serving and being a good steward of one's community by transmitting the desires of the community. *Mandar obedeciendo* as a leadership quality can be understood within the context of Jimena's lived experiences in México and as immigrant in the United States. Scholars have documented how immigration shapes gender relations, sexual beliefs and practices of both immigrant men and women (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; González-López 2005) and so too I contend that immigration shapes the ways in which Latin American women do leadership. Generation and migration shape the ways in which women do leadership. Jimena for example immigrated to the U.S in her mid-forties bringing her cultural and social capital as well as her organizing skills and expertise. Her academic and professional training and her exposure to the Zapatista movement influenced her perception of social organizing and leadership. Thus, Jimena is linguistically and ideologically using *mandar obedeciendo* as a relational process, non-authoritarian and non-hierarchical form of

leadership. This is eloquently captured in the above quote when she says "*obedecer lo que la gente quiere que yo haga como su líder* [obey what people want me to do as their leader]. So it's turning around the role of the leader." Bordas (2007) would describe this as "community servanthood and stewardship" because it shifts the responsibility of leadership to one of serving and being accountable to the collective.

Leadership behind the scenes

Nurturing leadership behind the scenes and mentoring is a fourth element of doing leadership. Barbara, a former MEChista and who is now pursing her master's degree in education views leadership as someone who stays behind the scenes, someone that is willing to work hard and not receive recognition or credit for the work. This is what she said about several Latinas head of non-profit organizations in Austin that work on immigrant rights:

> I haven't had much interaction with Rebeca and Caroline as much with Suzanna and Fabiola *pero creo que ellas también* [but I think that they] in their own right have done lot and to continue to organize. I think in that sense they are leaders who are willing to stay behind, right, *no necesitan estar enfrente todo el tiempo* [they don't always need to be in the front], they are willing to put the hours in, I consider that in a lot of ways leadership.

Barbara notes that we do not have one leader like César Chávez but that in Austin there are several Latinas organizing and leading non-profit organizations. For Barbara,

the women that she mentions are leaders because they work hard and are "willing to put the hours" and who are willing to stay behind the scenes. These women know when to step back and let others lead without having to be on the front lines all the time.

Leadership behind the scenes is exactly what Flor did as part of her involvement with NICA, a Nicaraguan group that was formed in 2008 to advocate for the rights of Nicaraguan immigrants in Austin. Flor is a Nicaraguan immigrant in her forties who immigrated to the United States in the mid-1990s for economic reasons. Flor has always been involved in community issues primarily through her local catholic parish, San José Church in Austin. However, it was not until the fall of 2007 that her local priest informed her about a group of Nicaraguan immigrants who were trying to start a group called NACA. Flor was attracted to the idea of meeting other compatriots and doing "something good for the community" that she got involved. Flor has been involved with NICA since its inception; her activities have ranged from calling people to attend meetings, cooking to raise funds, to helping organize the May 1st march in 2008 and 2009. In recounting her participation in the planning for the May 1st march, Flor said that she does not like speaking in public and rather be "behind the cameras" a metaphor to being behind the scenes. She said that,

> I am not much of a speaker, I do not have that ability but I do like everything that has to do with the computer, write letters, send e-mails, invite people to rallies; I like that type of movement [activities].

Although Flor did not say what leadership is, we learn that a leader is both a person who can speak in public and someone who can be behind the scenes. In her own way, Flor is a leader who is willing to put the hours behind the scenes to get things done. Chin (2007, 360) reminds us that the not so visible roles of women are forms of leadership,

> When roles are not public or associated with physical valor, our societies have tended not to view these roles as providing leadership. If we interpret them as ineffective or less valued as style of leadership, we will have missed the point. If we define them from the perspective of white middle-class society, we will continue to marginalize leaders from diverse groups. If we ignore the contexts in which these women leaders lead…we will have committed the same errors found in the existing models of leadership we criticize.

Chicanas/Latinas are always involved in doing leadership because it is gendered and embedded in their everyday tasks in the home, community, work, social institutions, and society at large. When we adopt a definition of leadership that is limited to formal positions, positions of power, traits, charisma, and skills, the everyday, creative, and nuanced leadership practices of Chicana/Latina women are obscured.

The Chicana/Latinas I interviewed criticized dominant styles of leadership, in particular the notion of the male charismatic leader. Still a few continued to internalize some of the traditional elements of leadership like charisma and being a good public speaker. Others referred to leadership as serving and leading by obeying which at first

glance appears oppressive and inherently contradictory to feminist theorizing yet it is linguistically, ideologically, and politically creative. For the women, it is far from being patriarchal or oppressive. What we learn from Chicanas/Latinas in this study is that they are using serving and leading by obeying as a relational process, non-authoritarian and as non-hierarchical. Doing leadership is centered on the collective rather than on the individual. Doing leadership is rooted in women's everyday life social engagements, doing leadership is everyday life leadership.

CONCLUSION: PASADO, PRESENTE Y FUTURO

The final chapter centers on the future role of the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) in the immigrant rights movement. It also provides a summary and conclusion of the dissertation's main arguments. My original motivation for doing this research was to learn how people came together to pull off an impressive march in Austin, Texas in L*a Primavera Latina* of 2006. Some commentaries noted the role of the Catholic Church, the media and coalitions in pulling off the marches, but how exactly did this happen? Who was involved and why?

The purpose of this research has been to explore the processes of an immigrant rights coalition and document its activity. In doing so, I have examined the role of the participants and organizations involved. This dissertation sought to explain how the AIRC formed, what role it played during the 2006 mobilizations, and what the AIRC is doing now. The research questions that guided this research are: (1) How did AIRC emerge from the established organizations and activist networks in Austin, Texas? (2) What did AIRC do after the 2006 marches and what is its relationship with organizations in Austin? (3) What are the different ways AIRC has attempted to mobilize Latino(a) and pro-immigrant activism?

The framework developed in this study to analyze IRCs and Latinas in the immigrant rights movement builds on and beyond Magaña & Mejia (2004) five stage Latino grassroots politics. They identify five major stages in the history of Latino grassroots politics: first, the period of oppositional politics after 1848 immediately following the U.S. annexation of northern Mexican territories (*1848-1900)*; second, the

period of the mutual aid societies, and industrial labor activism (*1900-1940)*; third, the period marked by World War II known as the Mexican American generation (*1940s-1960s)*; fourth, mass demonstrations and movements for civil rights during the 1960s and 1970s (*1960s-1970s)*; and fifth, the period leading up to the present involving local and transnational forms of protest politics and grassroots organizing *(1980s-1990s*). I propose a sixth stage in this historical framework characterize by growing number of immigrant rights coalitions, the apparent lack of a male charismatic leader, and new ways of understanding Latina leadership and activism. The argument is that the rise of coalitions in 2006 became a common method of organizing and mobilizing immigrants and allies across the nation. Why? The reliance on coalition structures is different from mobilizations of the past and provides an organizational infrastructure well suited to the present geographic dispersion of immigrants.

This dissertation research also explored and examined the tensions and conflicts that surfaced during and after the 2006 marches. Scholars have confirmed that in some cases, different perceptions and views led to the splitting of coalitions and the emergence of parallel coalitions. In Los Angeles, for example, one coalition called for comprehensive immigration reform, while another supported full amnesty (Engeman 2009). In Austin, Texas what ensued was a splitting of the AIRC partly because of different agendas and different views about what the AIRC should look like and who should be involved. The AIRC split resulted from a lack of internal structure and an inter-organizational decision-making body coupled with a lack of clear organizational identity. Organizations who worked with immigrants felt that the AIRC should be led by and for

immigrants. Currently, this is the situation for the AIRC which is trying to build a grassroots immigrant rights base through the *Promotores de Derechos Humanos*/ Human Rights Promoters.

Unlike other cities like Los Angeles and Chicago, where the Catholic Church and the Spanish speaking media seemed to have played a central role, in Austin they played a small role. The AIRC used several Catholic parishes to hold meetings but the Catholic Church itself did not play a central role in the 2006 marches. The Catholic Diocese of Austin did not take a vocal position opposing H.R. 4437. Similarly, television, radio and print media did not play a central role in the 2006 marches. Juan Castillo, writer for the American Statesman wrote several articles covering the 2006 marches and local Spanish newspapers like Ahora Si, El Mundo, and El Norte discussed house bill H.R. 4437 but none of the newspapers or radio stations took a public stand on H.R. 4437.

This brings me to my next contribution, the role of Latinas. Martinez (2010) insightful work on 2006 pro-immigrant rights marches has shifted the focus of analysis for sociologists of social movements and Chicana(o)/Latina(o) scholars who study both Latino political and civic participation to include the role of women. In her exploration of the 2006 mobilizations from the perspective of community-based organizations (CBOs), Martinez explains why family and culture frames were prominently in CBOs mobilization efforts. She notes that CBOs were able to mobilize a larger number of protestors by forming a large, statewide immigrant rights coalition composed of immigrant rights groups, labor unions, Latino civic groups, and religious leaders. What is striking about her study is not only that a coalition was formed to mobilize around H.R

4437 but *who* was behind the mobilizing. Martinez shows through in depth interviews with CBOs that H.R. 4437 was framed round familism to encourage families, in particular Latinas' roles as women and mothers to mobilize family members. My work has turned to the study of Immigrant Rights Coalitions (IRCs) with women at the center of the analysis- and here too, my research has found that Latina activism is largely driven by their roles as women and mothers. However, what is different is how Latinas in this study view and conceptualize their leadership. For the women in this study leadership embodies four processes: leadership is shared, leadership serves the community, leadership leads by obeying and leadership often unfolds behind the scenes

This dissertation research offers an analysis of how Latinas facilitated and mobilized participation in the immigrant rights movement and its aftermath. This research contributes to knowledge of the immigrant rights movement and calls to move beyond conventional views of the locus of women's activism. It offers a look at alternative and unconventional contexts for women's leadership and activism. The increased interest in the 2006 mobilizations and Latino activism more generally has shown the need to challenge stereotypical assumptions about leadership, immigrant's agency, and women's activism.

Furthermore, based on this dissertation we can substantiate the argument that we are in a new era of immigrant rights organizing that is characterized by a lack of a male charismatic leader, immigrant rights coalitions and new leadership models of Chicana/Latina organizing. Unlike other social movements that either die or go into a quiescent stage, the immigrant rights movement is alive and strong and in it for the long

shot. The immigrant rights movement is more than advocating and pushing for immigration reform, it is about creating self-sufficient communities that can advocate for their rights.

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANTS IN STUDY

Pseudonym & Age	Country of Birth	Immigration Status	Arrived to the U.S.	Reason for immigrating	Education	Organization
Rosalia, 46	México	Visa	1995	Economic situation in Mexico	8th grade	ILA
Antonia, 39	México	Dual citizenship	1991	Seeking a better life	BA: Ethnic Studies & Spanish	ILA
Clarisa, 24	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	U.S. born	BA	PODER
Jimena, 64	México	H1B Visa	1992	Academic reason	PhD	AFSC
Berenice, 30	México	Tourist visa	2004	Earn & save money to return to Mexico	Culinary certification	KOOP "El Inmigrante"
Javier, 49	México	Permanent Resident	1978	Economic situation in Mexico	2nd grade	Club Oriundo San Luis Potosí
Rodrigo, 44	México	Permanent Resident	1984	Trip, visit another country	H.S equivalent	Club Oriundo Mexiquense
Carlos, 60	México	Naturalized citizen	1981	Tour	College education	CRISOL
Esmeralda, 22	U.S.	U.S citizen	1986	N/A	BA: Public Relations	AIRC
Daniela, 27	Venezuela	Permanent Resident	2000	International student	Master's in Public affairs	CAPE, AFSC
Luis, 45	Guatemala	Permanent Resident	1989	Seeking a better future	High School equivalent	Asociación de Guatemaltecos
Fernando, 44	Guatemala	Undocumented	1989	Escape civil war	3 semesters of medicine	Asociación de Guatemaltecos
Veronica, 36	Colombia	Naturalized citizen	2001	Vacation	University	ILA
Alberto	México	Naturalized Citizen	1988	Economic situation	H.S equivalent	Cristo Rey
Nancy, 26	U.S.	N/A	N/A	N/A	MA	AIRC
Monica, 30	México	Permanent	1991	Economic	MA	University

		Resident		situation		Leadership Initiative
Rodolfo, 59	Colombia	Naturalized citizen	1972	International student	BS: economics	Asociación de Colombianos
Pilar, 50	México	Resident	1980	Political activism	BA: History	CRISOL
Juan Antonio, 49	U.S.	U.S Citizen	N/A	N/A	BA	KOOP "Formas en el Aire"
Peter, 28	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	BA	Grassroots Leadership
Kathy, 26	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	BA	Migrant Clinicians Network
Karina, 33	México	U.S. citizen	1986	Poverty	PhD	Texas Criminal Justice Coalition
Alma, 25	México	Green Card	1990	Came with parents	BA	University Leadership Initiative
Eleazar, 28	Nicaragua	Undocumented	1996	Seeking opportunities in U.S.	BS in home country	NICA, AIRC
John, 30	U.S	U.S citizen	N/A	N/A	BS	AIRC steering committee
Barbara, 22	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	BA	MEChA, PODER,
Jeff, 55	U.S	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	MA	AFSC, AIRC, ILA
Flor, 45	Nicaragua	Permanent Resident	1998	Economic situation	High school equivalent	NICA, AIRC
Jesús, 35	Nicaragua	Undocumented	2006	Economic situation	HS. Equivalent	NICA, AIRC
Rebeca, 27	U.S	U.S Citizen	N/A	N/A	BA	PDL
Fabiola, 29	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	BA	PODER
Nicole, 34	U.S	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	MS	ISNA
Amy, 35	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	MA	Catholic Charities
Melecio, 44	Nicaragua	Green Card	2005	Academic	PhD candidate	San Jose Church
Kimberly, 52	U.S	N/A	N/A	N/A	MA	Casa Marianella
Carolina, 27	U.S	N/A	N/A	N/A	MA	AIRC
Elaine, 33	Vietnam	U.S citizen	1977	Refugee	MA	Saheli
Gloria, 32	México	Undocumented		Economic	Elementary	PDL/AIRC

				situation	school	steering committee
Sonia, 47	Venezuela	U.S Citizen	1978	School	BA	Asociación de Venezolanos
Silky, 28	U.S.	U.S citizen	N/A	N/A	BA	Former AIRC member
Maya, 53	U.S	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	ABD	Interpreter
Noemí, 23	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	BA	AIRC volunteer/PDL
Marlene, 29	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	MA	AIRC steering committee
Lary, 40's	Nigeria	Refugee	2004	Refugee	Elementary school	MRC
Erin, 35	U.S.	U.S	N/A	N/A	BS	MRC
Francisca, 32	Colombia	Refugee	2004	Refugee	BA	MRC
Kelly, 30	U.S.	U.S. Citizen	N/A	N/A	PhD	TUFF, AIRC
Paula Ximena, 30's	Chile	U.S Citizen	1980s	Family reasons	BA-U.S.	Refugio, Mamas of Color Rising
Ester, 38	México	Undocumented	1999	Family reasons	9th grade	PDL, AIRC
Norma, 42	Nicaragua	Undocumented	1992	Economic	6th grade	NICA, AIRC
Margaret, 40's	U.S.	N/A	N/A	N/A	MA	AIRC member
Violeta, 30's	México	Undocumented	2006	Family reasons	7th grade-Mexico	Santa Barbara
Xenia, 43	Mexico	Permanent resident	2006	Economic	BS	AIRC steering committee

APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATIONS IN STUDY

Abbr.	Organization	Formed	Type of Organization	Single & Multi Issue	AIRC member	Attends IRC activities	Ties to AIRC
AFSC	American Friends Service Committee	1917	Soc.Jus/Rel/ Int.Pol	Multi issue	YES	YES	Moderate
CRISOL	CRISOL:Pro-educacion y Cultura	2005	Id.Grps	Multi issue	YES	YES	Strong
N/A	Cristo Rey Church	N/A	Religious	Multi issue	YES	YES	Moderate
HTA	Club Oriundo San Luis Potosi	2004	Id.Grps	Single issue	NO	NO	None
HTA	Club Oriundo Mexiquense	2003	Id.Grps	Single issue	NO	NO	None
HTA	Asociación de Guatemaltecos	2005	Id.Grps	Single issue	NO	NO	None
HTA	Asociación de Colombianos	1984, 2003	Id.Grps	Single issue	NO	NO	None
HTA	Asociación de Venenzolanos	2001	Id. Grps	Single issue	NO	NO	None
HTA	NICA: Nicaragüenses	2009	ID.Grp, Soc. Jus	Multi-issue	YES	YES	Strong
ILA	Inmigrantes Latinos en Accion	2001	Id.Grps/ Soc. Jus	Multi-issue	YES	YES	Strong
PDL	Projecto Defensa Laboral	2002	Soc. Jus	Multi issue	YES	YES	Moderate
PODER	People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources	1991	Env/ Soc. Jus	Multi issue	NO	YES	Moderate
ULI	University Leadership Initiative	2005	Soc. Jus/ Id. Grps	Multi issue	YES	YES	Moderate
N/A	Casa Marianella	1986	Soc. Jus/Id. Grps	Multi-issue	NO	YES	Moderate
N/A	Catholic Charities of Central Texas	2002	Soc.Jus/Rel	Multi-issue	YES	YES	Weak
ISNA	Immigrant Services Network of Austin	2003	Soc. Jus	Single issue	NO	NO	Weak
N/A	Manos de Cristo	1988	Id Grps	Single issue	NO	NO	None

	El Buen Samaritano	1987	Soc. Jus, Id Grps	Multi-issue	NO	Sometimes	Weak
LULAC	League of United Latin American Citizens	1945	Soc. Jus, Id.Grps	Multi issue	YES	Sometimes	Moderate
N/A	Grassroots Leadership	1980	Soc. Jus	Single issue	YES	YES	Strong
N/A	Migrant Clinicians Network	1984	Other	Single issue	No	No	None
SB	Santa Barbara Catholic Church	N/A	Religious	Multi issue	YES	YES	Moderate
TCJC	Texas Criminal Justice Coalition	1999	Soc. Jus	Multi Issue	NO	NO	Weak
MEChA	Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan	1969	Id. Grps, Soc. Jus	Multi issue	YES	YES	Moderate
MRC	Multicultural Refugee Coalition	2007	Id Grps	Multi Issue	NO	NO	None
N/A	Mamas of Color Rising/Refugio		Id. Grps, Soc. Jus	Multi Issue	NO	NO	Moderate

Note: Group Types: Id.Grps = Based on Sexual Orientation, race/ethnicity, Gender identity; Env= Environmental Groups; Rel= Religious Groups; Int. Pol= International Politics; Soc. Jus=Social Justice (Meyer & Corrigall-Brown 2006)

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE (for organizations)

1. **Introduction**
    i. The purpose of the study and why respondent was chosen
    ii. Expected duration of the interview (1 to 2 hours)
    iii. Sign consent form and fill out demographic sheet

2. **Gender & Activism biography**
    i. When did you become of age as an activist? What this is the U.S? Can you recall why you decided to get involved in the community?
    ii. Were your parents or anyone in your immediate family or friends active in community issues or groups?
    iii. Has becoming involved in community activism changed your life? If so, how?
    iv. Has your community involvement brought about any changes in the household?
    v. How do you manage to carry out other responsibilities in the household?
    vi. What does your wife/husband/partner say about your community activism?
    vii. How would you define an activist? Based on this definition do you consider yourself an activist?
    viii. Is there a difference between being an activist and a volunteer?
    ix. What makes a good leader for you? Do you consider yourself a leader?

3. **Organization**
    i. When did you start working at (name of organization)?
    ii. What made you decide to work at this organization?
    iii. Tell me about your organization (services, activities, goals, funding, etc)
    iv. What is the staff composition of your organization (age, gender, race, education, activism experience)?
    v. What issues is your organization working on? How does your organization decide on these issues?
    vi. Are you in charge of any programs?
    vii. Are you a member, board of directors, and/or committee of other organizations? If so, which one(s)
    viii. Is your organization known by public officials?

4. **Relationships with other organizations**
    i. Does your organization collaborate with other organizations at the local and national level? If so, which ones and in what capacity (i.e. activities, projects, etc)?
    ii. Have those organizations always worked with one another? Are you satisfied with that working relationship?
    iii. Can you think of any disagreements/disappointments with the actions of other organizations? When was that? What happened? How was it resolved?
    iv. Have you experienced political fragmentation because of different political agendas with other organizations/coalition?
    v. Does your organization reach to the Latino immigrant community or other immigrants? If so, how?

vi. With which other organizations do you tend to identity the most? Why?
vii. Do you work/collaborate with churches in Austin or HTA's?

5. La "Primavera Latina" pro-immigrant marches

i. Did you participate in protests prior to 2006? If so, which ones? Where was this?
ii. How different was it from the 2006 protests?
iii. Did you participate in the immigrant rights marches in 2006, 2007, 2008?
iv. What inspired you to oppose HR 4437?
v. How did HR4437 make you feel? (i.e., angry, upset, etc)
vi. Were you afraid that someone close to you or yourself might be deported?
vii. Do you think the bill was directed at any group in particular? (i.e. Mexican issue?). Related to this, do you think Mexicans have things in common with Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and other people of Latin American descent? What things?
viii. Why do you think the protest gained national attention?
ix. Do you think it made a difference that people protested?
x. How do you feel about the usage of the Mexican flag, face painting, etc in the immigration protests?
xi. In subsequent protests, participants were wearing white t-shirts and carrying U.S. flags, do you know how this happened?
xii. Were you involved in the planning of the marches?
xiii. Did you have role in the marches (i.e. leader, organizer, spokesperson, banner carrier, etc)
xiv. What is the greatest moment and greatest challenge participating in the marches (2006, 2007, 2008)?
xv. What has the immigrant marches meant to you?
xvi. How would you define successful? Based on your definition, do you think the immigration protests were successful?
xvii. If you have to list two things that were noticeable of the marches, what would these be?
xviii. Do you think the 2006 protests/marches are the beginning of a new Hispanic/Latino social movement?
xix. Do you think an organization played a dominant role?
xx. Do you think the Catholic Church played a role in the protests locally and/or nationally? If so, how?

6. Student Walkouts

i. Were you aware that in 2006 middle school and high school students' walkout?
ii. Do you know why the students walkout? Do you agree/disagree that students walked out?
iii. How did you react to the student walkouts?
iv. How did the community react? Do you think it was fair/o.k in how the way the community reacted?
v. Do you know if students were mobilized by organizations to participate in the marches?

vi. Did you/your organization worked with high school students in the aftermath of the walkouts? In what capacity? (i.e. Mega Marcha, Boycott, leadership training, educational workshops, etc)
vii. Do you think the student walkouts changed/shaped the immigrant movement?
viii. How different do you view the 2006 walkouts from 1968? Do you think there is a generational gap between the walkouters and activists?

7. Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition

i. Is your organization a member of the AIRC? If not, why? what incentives/benefits do you think are important for becoming a member?
ii. If you or your organization is part of the coalition, when and why did you join?
iii. Are you or your organization involved in any of the activities of the coalition? If so, which ones?
iv. Do you know if there a spokesperson for the AIRC?
v. Do you know how the coalition framed HR 4437?
vi. Did the coalition use any tactics for the marches?
vii. Did the coalition use any strategies to recruit people to attend the rallies?
viii. What slogans did the coalition used in the marches to obtain attention?
ix. In your opinion, is there a visible organization(s) at the forefront of the immigrant issues in the AIRC?
x. What direction does the AIRC appear to be heading?
xi. Would you like to see something done differently in the coalition?
xii. Has there been, in your opinion, any critical event in the development of the AIRC?
xiii. Has there been, in your opinion conflict, tension, disagreement in the AIRC? What were they?
xiv. What has been the greatest challenge working with the AIRC?
xv. Does your organization use the name of the AIRC? If so, in what circumstances?
xvi. Have you gained something for joining the AIRC?
xvii. Do you know how does the AIRC sustains itself financially?

8. Media

i. Do you think the media was supportive/ sympathetic to the protests?
ii. How did the media cover the protests? Did the way the media cover the protests vary from media outlets?
iii. The most popular radio show in the nation is “Piolin por la mañana” affiliated with Univision, have you heard of this show? do you listen to this show? Do you like it? Do you think this show played a role in the immigration protests?

9. Interview closure

i. Is there a question I did not ask you that you consider important to share?

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE (for individuals)

1. **Introduction**
   i. The purpose of the study and why respondent was chosen
   ii. Expected duration of the interview (1 to 2 hours)
   iii. Sign consent form and fill out demographic sheet

2. **Gender & Activism biography**
   i. When did you become of age as an activist? What this is the U.S? Can you recall why you decided to get involved in the community?
   ii. Were your parents or anyone in your immediate family or friends active in community issues or groups?
   iii. Has becoming involved in community activism changed your life? If so, how?
   iv. Has your community involvement brought about any changes in the household?
   v. How do you manage to carry out other responsibilities in the household?
   vi. What does your wife/husband/partner say about your community activism?
   vii. How would you define an activist? Based on this definition do you consider yourself an activist?
   viii. Is there a difference between being an activist and a volunteer?
   ix. What makes a good leader for you? Do you consider yourself a leader?

3. **La "Primavera Latina" pro-immigrant marches**
   i. Did you participate in protests prior to 2006? If so, which ones? Where was this?
   ii. How different was it from the 2006 protests?
   iii. Did you participate in the immigrant rights marches in 2006, 2007, 2008?
   iv. What inspired you to oppose HR 4437?
   v. How did HR4437 make you feel? (i.e., angry, upset, etc)
   vi. Were you afraid that someone close to you or yourself might be deported?
   vii. Do you think the bill was directed at any group in particular? (i.e. Mexican issue?). Related to this, do you think Mexicans have things in common with Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and other people of Latin American descent?
   viii. Why do you think the protest gained national attention?
   ix. Do you think it made a difference that people protested?
   x. How do you feel about the usage of the Mexican flag, face painting, etc in the immigration protests?
   xi. In subsequent protests, participants were wearing white t-shirts and carrying U.S. flags, do you know how this happened?
   xii. Were you involved in the planning of the marches?
   xiii. Did you have role in the marches (i.e. leader, organizer, spokesperson, banner carrier, etc)
   xiv. What is the greatest moment and the greatest challenge participating in the marches (2006, 2007, 2008)?
   xv. What has the immigrant marches meant to you?
   xvi. How would you define successful? Based on your definition, do you think the immigration protests were successful?

xvii. If you have to list two things that were noticeable of the marches, what would these be?
xviii. Do you think the 2006 protests/marches are the beginning of a new Hispanic/Latino social movement?
xix. Do you think an organization played a dominant role?
xx. Do you think the Catholic Church played a role in the protests locally and/or nationally?

4. Student Walkouts

i. Were you aware that in 2006 middle school and high school students' walkout?
ii. Do you know why the students walkout? Do you agree/disagree that students walked out?
iii. How did you react to the student walkouts?
iv. How did the community react? Do you think it was fair/o.k the way the community reacted?
v. Do you know if students were mobilized by organizations to participate in the marches?
vi. Did you/your organization worked with high school students in the aftermath of the walkouts? If so, in what capacity? (i.e. Mega Marcha, Boycott, leadership training, educational workshops, etc)
vii. Do you think the student walkouts changed/shaped the immigrant movement?
viii. How different do you view the 2006 walkouts from 1968?
ix. Do you think there is a generational gap between the walkouters and activists?

5. Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition

i. Are you or your organization involved/member of the AIRC? If not, why? What incentives/benefits do you think are important for becoming a member?
ii. If you are part of the coalition, when and why did you join?
iii. Are you involved in any of the activities of the coalition? If so, which ones?
iv. Do you know how the coalition framed HR 4437?
v. Do you know if the coalition used any tactics for the marches?
vi. Do you know if the coalition used any strategies to recruit people to attend the rallies?
vii. What slogans did the coalition used in the marches to obtain attention?
viii. In your opinion, is there a visible organization(s) at the forefront of the immigrant issues in the AIRC?
ix. What direction does the AIRC appear to be heading?
x. Would you like to see something done differently?
xi. Has there been, in your opinion, any critical event in the development of the AIRC?
xii. Has there been, in your opinion conflict, tension, disagreement in the AIRC? What were they?
xiii. What has been the greatest challenge working with the AIRC?
xiv. Have you gained something for joining the AIRC?
xv. Do you think there was a leader(s) in the 2006 marches either locally, state, or nationally?
xvi. Do you or the AIRC collaborate with hometown associations?

6. **Media**
    i. Do you think the media was supportive/ sympathetic to the protests?
    ii. How did the media cover the protests? Did the way the media cover the protests vary from media outlets?
    iii. The most popular radio show in the nation is "Piolin por la mañana" affiliated with Univision, have you heard of this show? do you listen to this show? Do you like it? Do you think this show played a role in the immigration protests?

7. **Interview closure**
    i. Is there a question I did not ask you that you consider important to share?

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM (English)

Title: "The Start of a New Era:?" Examining the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) and Experiences of Latina and Non-Latina women

Conducted By: Hortencia Jimenez, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Sociology, hjimenez@austin.utexs.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The person in charge of this research will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time and your refusal will not impact current or future relationships with UT Austin or participating sites. To do so simply tell the researcher you wish to stop participation. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this consent for your records.

The purpose of this study is to explain how the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) formed, what role it played during the 2006 mobilizations, and what the AIRC is doing now.

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

- Participate in an interview discussing your participation in the AIRC

Total estimated time to participate in this study is between 1 and 2 hours

Risks and Benefits:

- A primary risk involves the loss of confidentiality; however, the risk associated with this study is no greater than everyday life.
  - *(a) interviews will be audiotape;*
  - *(b) tapes will be coded so that no personally identifying information is visible on them;*
  - *(c) tapes will be kept in a secure place (e.g., a locked file cabinet in the investigator's house);*
  - *(d) tapes will be heard or viewed only for research purposes by the investigator;*
  - (e) *tapes will be retained for possible future analysis*.

Compensation:

- There are no compensation benefits in participationg in this study

The **records** of this study will be stored securely and kept private. Authorized persons from The

University of Texas at Austin, members of the Institutional Review Board, and (study sponsors, if any) have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the **confidentiality** of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have any questions about the study please ask now. If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation call the researchers conducting the study. Their names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are at the top of this page. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact Jody Jensen, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at (512) 232-2685 or the Office of Research Support and Compliance at (512) 471-8871 or email: orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information and have sufficient information to make a decision about participating in this study. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature:_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F: CONSENT FORM (Spanish)

Título: "The Start of a New Era:?" Examining the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) and Experiences of Latina and Non-Latina women

Conducido por: Hortencia Jimenez, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Sociology, hjimenez@austin.utexs.edu

Le estoy pidiendo su participación en este estudio de investigación. Esta forma le provee la información sobre el estudio. La persona responsable de esta investigación también le explicara a usted este estudio y contestará todas sus preguntas e inquietudes. Lea por favor la información en esta forma, si tiene preguntas o cualquier otra pregunta que usted no entienda antes de decidir si desea participar en este estudio no dude en hacerlas antes de proceder. Su participación es voluntaria y puede tomar la decisión en cualquier momento de no participar más. No habrá penalidades o pérdidas de cualquier cosa que usted se pueda beneficiar. Usted puede cancelar su participación en cualquier momento con solo decirle al investigador.

El propósito de este estudio es recopilar información sobre la coalición, the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC). Por ejemplo, cuando se formo la coalición, que papel jugo durante las marchas del 2006, y los proyectos que esta realizando hoy día.

Si usted esta de acuerdo en participar en este estudio, le pediremos lo siguiente:

- Que participe en una entrevista en la cual usted nos platica sobre su participación en la coalición.

Tiempo para esta investigación es un estimado de 1 a 2 horas

Riesgos y ventajas al participar en este estudio:

•Un riesgo principal implica la pérdida de su confidencialidad

(a) las entrevistas serán en audio grabadas;

(b) las cintas serán codificadas para que no exista información que la pueda identificar

(c) las cintas serán mantenidas en un lugar seguro (en un gabinete bajo llave que se encontrará en la casa de la investigadora);

(d) las cintas serán oídas o vistas solamente para propósitos de investigación por la investigadora;

(e) *las cintas serán conservadas por si se necesitan en un análisis en el futuro*

Renumeración:

• No hay ninguna renumeración

Los expedientes de este estudio serán almacenados en un lugar seguro y mantenidos en privado. Las personas autorizadas de la Universidad de Texas en Austin, miembros del comité de IRB, y (los patrocinadores del estudio, si hay alguno) tienen el derecho legal de revisar sus expedientes de investigación, pero protegerán su **confidencialidad** al grado que permita la ley. Todas las publicaciones excluirán cualquier información que lo/la pueda identificar como sujeto.

Contactos y preguntas:
Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre este estudio, ahora es el momento de hacer sus preguntas. Si usted tiene preguntas más adelante o desea información adicional, comuníquese con los investigadores que están a cargo de este estudio. Sus nombres, números de teléfono, y direcciones de correo electrónico se encuentran en la parte superior de este documento. Si usted tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en esta investigación, comuníquese con Jody Jensen, Ph.D., Chair, que encabeza el IRB en la Universidad de Texas en Austin al (512) 232-2685 ó la Oficina de Research Support and Compliance at (512) 471-8871, correo electronico: orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

Se le proporcionará una copia de esta información para que la mantenga en su expediente.

Declaración que da su consentimiento:

La firma del participante en este documento indica que esta de acuerdo en participar en este estudio. Yo he leído la información antedicha y tengo la información necesaria para tomar una decisión con respecto a mi participación en este estudio. Consiento mi participación en este estudio.

Firma:_____ Fecha: _____

_____ Fecha: _____
Firma de la persona que obtiene consentimiento

Firma del investigador:_____ Fecha: _____

APPENDIX G: SITE LETTER OF SUPPORT

January 15, 2009

Dr. Jody Jensen, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board
P.O. Box 7426
Austin, TX 78713
irbchair@austin.utexas.edu

Dear Dr. Jensen:

The purpose of this letter is to grant Hortencia Jiménez, a doctorate student at the University of Texas at Austin permission to conduct research on the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC). The project, "'The Start of a New Era?": Examining the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) and Experiences of Latina and Non-Latina women" entails examining the AIRC in order to understand the past and future work of immigrant rights coalitions. In particular, it seeks to explain how the AIRC formed, what role it played during the 2006 mobilizations, and what the AIRC is doing now. Her study also seeks to shed light on the role and experiences of Latina and non-Latina women in the AIRC. Her research entails interviewing a total of fifty men and women of local immigrant serving organizations and members involved with the AIRC in Austin, Texas over the age of 18.

Interviews will be conducted either by phone or in person. Interviews are intended to last between one to two hours and will be conducted at the interviewee's preferred location (i.e., office, home, coffee shop, or library).

The AIRC was selected for this study because the year 2006 witnessed the historic mobilization of pro-immigrant rights activism in the U.S. to oppose House Bill H.R. 4437. Supporters of immigrant rights throughout the country coordinated an unprecedented mobilization of grassroots support and mass defiance. This was the case of the AIRC. However, not enough research exists in this area to document how immigrant rights coalitions started, what organizations they are affiliated with, how they are sustained, etc. More importantly, we do not know how coalitions operate and what their relationship is to established organizations and to the immigrant communities that they seek to defend, represent, and mobilize.

Hortencia has been active with the AIRC since 2007 and recently joined the AIRC steering committee. Upon completing her dissertation research (2011) Hortencia will set up a meeting with the AIRC coordinator to share her research findings.

I, Caroline Keating-Guerra, do herby grant permission for Hortencia Jiménez to conduct research of the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition.

Sincerely,

Caroline Keating-Guerra, *Coordinator*
Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC)

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Vita

Hortencia Jimenez was born in Nayarit, México in August 1979 and raised in Watsonville, California. She completed her Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Arts in Sociology at San Jose State University in San Jose, California. Before pursuing her PhD, she worked in the non-profit immigrant rights sector and taught Sociology and Ethnic Studies at San Jose City College and the National Hispanic University. The non-profit sector and her teaching shaped Hortencia's research and teaching interests. She began her doctoral studies in Sociology in the Fall of 2005 at the University of Texas at Austin, for which she was awarded several fellowships by the College of Liberal Arts. After her graduation, Hortencia will continue to work as a professor for the California Community College system teaching Sociology and Ethnic studies.

This dissertation was typed by Hortencia Jiménez